

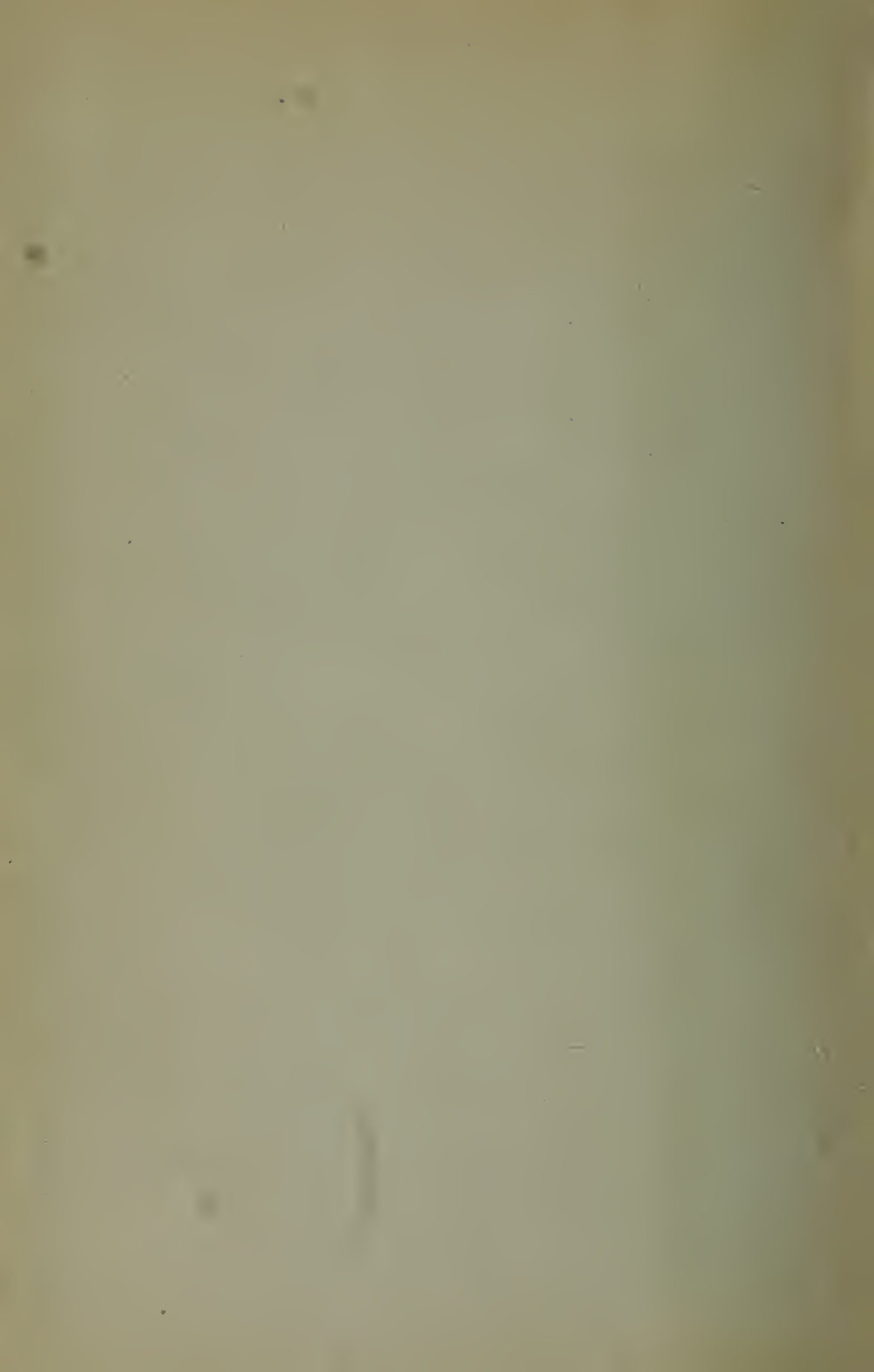


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BIOGRAPHIES

OF

ATTORNEY-GENERAL GEORGE P. BARKER, JOHN
C. LORD, D. D., MRS. JOHN C. LORD, AND
WILLIAM G. BRYAN, ESQ.

ALSO,

LECTURE ON JOURNALISM.

BY

GEORGE J. BRYAN.



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To

Numberless · Friends

In the
City of Buffalo and
Elsewhere, this

· · Volume · ·

Is Respectfully
Dedicated



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REV. F. J. BAINE

PREFACE.

MORE than a generation ago, I wrote the "Life of Attorney-General GEORGE P. BARKER." It was written *con amore*, and, I am happy to say, met with much favor, and was rewarded with success. Prominent among those who were kind in their approval of it, were the poet-editor of America, William Cullen Bryant, and John Van Buren. Time has not diminished my admiration of General Barker's genius and fascinating social qualities. I mainly reproduce the pen-portraits of thirty-seven years ago! Then, Buffalo only contained some 45,000 inhabitants. Now, it is a metropolitan city, with near a quarter of a million souls! I was hopeful in the olden time as to the future of our Queen City of the Lakes. Now, its brilliant success is assured.

My work also contains a memoir of the late JOHN C. LORD, D. D., one of the leading divines of the nation, and of Old School Presbyterianism. He was, in heart and soul, identified with the early history, the progression and the welfare of our city, and his memory is fondly cherished as one of its pillars.

A memoir of Mrs. JOHN C. LORD, whose life was consecrated to offices of religion and humanity, one whom all honored and revered, also appears in this volume.

I am permitted by the author, L. B. Proctor, Esq., to copy from his valuable work, "The Bench and Bar of New York," (issued in 1870) the memoir of my deceased brother, WILLIAM G. BRYAN, Esq., of Batavia, N. Y. It will, doubtless, be read with interest by his many friends.

I acknowledge the many obligations I am under to Hon. James O. Putnam, and Hon. Stephen Lockwood, for the

facilities they afforded me in the presentation of my sketches of Dr. and Mrs. John C. Lord. I liberally availed myself of the memorial papers of Mr. Putnam, of both. From Judge Lockwood's "Analysis of Dr. Lord's Religious Character," I found my impressions of the Doctor freshened and improved.

I am also deeply grateful to the Hon. Jewett M. Richmond and Rev. Robert Dick, for their generous and timely assistance in the publication of this work.

Finally, I call attention to the reproduction of my lecture on JOURNALISM, delivered before the Buffalo Historical Society, in 1876. I have added several pages to it, in order to render it more complete and bring the record down to the present time. In presenting the combined work, I recall to mind the many kindnesses and generous support I have received at the hands of the citizens of Buffalo during the past forty years. I am profoundly grateful for them. I have endeavored, to the best of my ability, to advocate the interests of the beautiful city in which so great a portion of my life has been spent. I have endeavored to uphold the rights, the amenities and the dignity of the Press; I have written this volume in the spirit of "malice towards none, charity towards all!"

To my cotemporaries in Journalism, I wish Godspeed in our noble profession.

G. J. B.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1886.

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LIFE OF GEORGE P. BARKER.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Early Career of Mr. Barker—His Collegiate History.

CONSPICUOUS among those names which have shed luster on Western New York, stands that of GEORGE PAYSON BARKER. Though all that was mortal of him has been gathered to his fathers, the fragrance of his good name survives in its original freshness. In his decease, Liberty lost one of its giant defenders; Oratory, one of its colossal pillars; Magnanimity, one of its noblest illustrations, and Generosity one of its striking examples. Few men ever lived in our country who were so singularly gifted with those rare qualities of the head and heart, that call forth admiration and enchain the affections. Entirely the architect of his own fortune, he carved out by his energy, perseverance and talent, a name of which any man might well be proud. He was a man of genius, impetuous and brilliant. Tall, exceedingly prepossessing and commanding in person; urbane in his manners; generous to a fault, with an ear never closed to the appeals of suffering humanity; the possessor of oratorical powers which have been compared to those that immortalize the name of Henry Clay; endowed with good judgment; possessing great decision and elasticity of mind; accessible to all, no wonder he was so universally popular. His deep sympathy with the masses; his appreciation of their true condition; his ever ready aid to the suffering, gathered around him hosts of devoted friends, who were true, whether fortune frowned or smiled upon his pathway. Such were

some of the general characteristics of the subject of this memoir. Citizens do not often overestimate townsmen, and sometimes see "things that are not to be seen" in the characters of those viewed through that distance which lends enchantment. As a general thing, Buffalonians, however, have ever done justice to GEORGE P. BARKER. His name has become identified with the history of the city. His eloquence, his ardent, generous nature cannot soon be forgotten. It is to place in a connected form the principal events of his brilliant career, that I write his biography. I have no desire to pen a fulsome panegyric. I shall endeavor in the course of this work to give in detail his history. While I freely accord to many greater ability to do so, I concede to no one a more enthusiastic admiration of his distinguishing traits. I purpose to narrate incidents illustrative of his character; to portray, as vividly and graphically as possible, his intellectual, moral and social qualities. If I succeed in chronicling a sufficiency of incidents to enable those who were unacquainted with him to arrive at an accurate estimate of his real character; if I can infuse into others something of the high admiration I entertain for the nobility of soul he possessed; something like a just estimation of his genius, my object will be attained. In my humble judgment there are few men now living who excel him in those qualities which exalt and dignify. In the language of an esteemed friend and classmate of the deceased, he was "Generous, high-minded, frank and chivalrous; gifted with a most delicate sense of honor, and a brilliant intellect. Whether he was a 'gentleman born' or not, I cannot say, but I am certain that nature made him a gentleman. There was an irresistible charm in his manner that no art or inheritance could impart."

Mr. BARKER was born at Rindge, in the State of New Hampshire, on the twenty-fifth of October, 1807. He was an only child. His parents were respectable, and in his

mother's line are found some of the most distinguished men in New England. Her maiden name was Payson. Mr. BARKER was much indebted to Rev. Dr. Payson, his maternal uncle, a clergyman of high standing, for his early education. He was prepared for college in his native state, under the private tuition of a clergyman, which was a custom much in vogue in New England thirty years since. He always thought this the most thorough part of his education. His father died when the subject of this memoir was quite young. His mother, however, is still living at Rindge. Although far advanced in years, she is still in full possession of all the faculties of a mind of remarkable strength, and enjoys the esteem of all who know her.

The materials out of which to gather his early career, I found very imperfect. His character up to entering Amherst college, was that of a bold, restless and promising boy. He gave early indications of the genius for which he was afterwards noted. He was fond of youthful pastimes, and at an early age developed the vigorous frame of a man. He was admitted into Amherst college in 1823, and immediately became distinguished as an indefatigable student. He indeed soon ranked among the first scholars of the institution.

He entered the senior class in Union college in October, 1826, on an honorable dismission from Amherst. Rev. Dr. Nott, the venerable and highly esteemed President of Union college, over which he has presided for some forty-four years, in answer to a letter addressed to him on the subject of Mr. BARKER'S collegiate career, writes me that he was in good standing as a scholar during the year he passed there, and that his attendance and application to study was equal to the best. He was in rather straightened circumstances, and depended mainly on his own exertions for support. He was often in the habit of attending the minor courts in Schenectady and some of the adjacent villages and trying causes. The remuneration, however, for these services was

of course inconsiderable. The college books show the prompt and honorable discharge, after leaving, of an obligation left with them for a portion of his college bills. Many of his classmates in college have become distinguished. Prominent among them are Hon. Preston King; Hon. Levi Hubbell, formerly adjutant-general of this state; Hon. Rufus W. Peckham, of Albany; William W. Campbell, of New York; Hon. Minthorne Tompkins, late state senator from Long Island; Hon. Virgil Paris, late M. C. from Maine; Hon. P. H. Sylvester, M. C. from Kinderhook; Rev. President Woods, of Bowdoin college, Brunswick, Maine; Rev. President McMaster, of the Miami University, Oxford, Ohio; Rev. John Wayland, D. D., late of Canandaigua, and Ambrose Stevens, Esq., of New York. Rev. Arthur Burtis, now of this city, was also one of his classmates. In our city are located several gentlemen who were in Union college at the time of Mr. BARKER'S connection with it, but they were members of younger classes and consequently did not graduate the same year. Hon. John T. Hudson, Hon. Joseph G. Masten, Elijah Ford, Esq., Dr. Charles Winne, and Rev. M. La Rue P. Thompson, are all I now recollect. To many of these gentlemen I addressed communications for the purpose of eliciting facts relative to his collegiate history. Quite a number of them rendered me prompt and satisfactory answers, which were of essential service. Some of them pronounced feeling and beautiful eulogies on the great merits of deceased. They speak of his personal appearance at that age (about nineteen years), as being unusually imposing; his manners and address quite superior; his conversational powers as unrivaled; and as having a natural fluency which placed him much in advance of all others of his age in the charms of social conversation and in the debates in which the members of his class were called upon at times to engage. His liberality to students whose circumstances or position were not equal to his own, was always

extended to the limits of his means. His kindness of heart and uniform amenity of deportment won a high place in the affections of all in the institution. He was an attentive and industrious student. In general information, history, biography, classical literature and the *belles-lettres*, he had few equals. Although in some departments of the course of studies he might have had superiors, it was thought he was unsurpassed in general scholarship. All confidently predicted that he would rise to distinction in after-life. It was conceded that he possessed abilities, industry and energy sufficient to surmount all obstacles; they were of such a sterling character as to be depressed by no opposition or adversity. He was in his college career sensibly alive to a good joke; in fact, were I disposed, I could narrate some adventures in which he shone proudly conspicuous. But, as it would be inconsistent with the limits of this work to do so, I forbear. None of them, however, exhibited qualities of a very exceptionable nature. They were simply the exuberances of a high-spirited youth; the offspring of a magnanimous disposition; the natural result of a keen sense of the ridiculous, and a convivial temperament. In many men they would have been less pardonable. They were to him part of his existence. He graduated with honor on the twenty-seventh of July, 1827, with the regard of his fellow-students and the respect of the faculty, and at the public commencement delivered an oration which elicited warm encomiums by the elegance of its composition and the eloquence of its delivery. His departure from the institution was regarded by those who knew him, as the breaking up of agreeable associations and the sundering of the pleasant bonds of social intercourse.

CHAPTER II.

His Life as a Student—Incidents—His Admission to the Bar—Nominated for the Legislature—Appointed District Attorney—His Marriage—Nominated for Congress.

MR. BARKER came on to Buffalo with a fearless heart and with a determination to succeed in whatever he might undertake. He arrived in the city about the first of August, 1827, and soon after entered the office of Stephen G. Austin, Esq., a highly respectable citizen, as a student at law. While in college, he entered his name as a student in the office of Alonzo C. Paige, Esq., in Schenectady, and, on leaving, procured a certificate of six months' clerkship. He came into the city a stranger, but soon gained the esteem of some of the most substantial citizens by his industry and application to business, and noble social qualities. I need not recount his arduous struggles to rise, the difficulties he overcame, nor the courage with which he surmounted obstacles. Like other students, he sometimes resorted to minor courts, and engaged in the causes which came under their jurisdiction. He soon attracted public attention by his superior oratorical powers, and was regarded as a young man of great promise. Vice-President Fillmore and Mr. BARKER were frequently employed on opposite sides in these minor courts, and each exerted himself to the utmost. Probably neither then anticipated their subsequent brilliant career. Mr. Fillmore then evinced that great industry and application which has since distinguished him, and laid the foundation of his future eminence.

The dull *routine* of Mr. BARKER'S studies were occasionally enlivened by adventures, some of which I shall notice. In order more fully to appreciate them, and not imbibe from them an erroneous impression, it is perhaps proper for me to

state that Buffalo, at that early day, was essentially different from the present busy emporium. It was then a small but rapidly growing village. It is now a great commercial city, of 45,000 inhabitants. The harbor did not then, as now, present a forest of masts, and numerous floating steam palaces. The streets were not as now thronged with a moving mass of life by day, nor illumined by brilliant gas-lights at night. The genius of Benjamin Rathbun had not then adorned it with edifices, which in architectural beauty and size compare favorably with those in older cities. Block after block of stately warehouses, and splendid private residences were not as now observed on all sides. None then living anticipated the rapid advances the city has since made in population, business and wealth. In other respects there was a difference. The want of literary institutions like the Young Men's Association, was felt by the young men, and the customs of the time were such as ordinarily pertain to a newly settled town. There is in every man's life a period when he acts from impulse. Youth, it is conceded, is generally that period. Then, if at all, do the passions master the judgment.

The subjoined incident has been kindly furnished by an intimate friend of deceased—a gentleman of high respectability—one who was alike his friend in youth and in after life when honors clustered around him. He was a participator also in the adventure. It illustrates his power to engage and entertain under most unpropitious circumstances, by his extraordinary command of language, his eloquent descriptive powers, his wit, his address and manly bearing :

“On one occasion, some eighteen years ago, BARKER and another young gentleman, with myself, got up a sleigh ride, and invited ten young ladies to go with us in a large stage sleigh to Hamburgh, some twelve miles out. We started late in the afternoon, intending to return in the evening after supper. Our ride out and sojourn at the public house there,

was exceedingly enlivened by BARKER'S inexhaustible fund of wit and humor. But before we were ready to return there came on a most violent storm of snow and wind, which dampened the ardor and alarmed some of the more timid of the young ladies. We, however, sallied forth to return about ten o'clock—ten young ladies and three gentlemen crowded into one sleigh—full of glee and animation, though the storm was unusually violent, even for this lake shore.

“After proceeding a mile or two, the driver lost his road, and wandered far out of his way, so that after some three hours' drive, over roads almost entirely obstructed by the drifting snow, we came to a dead halt in an open field, without the power of going another foot, and, as we afterwards learned, some six miles out of our way in the town of Boston, a mile or more from any house, the weather intensely cold, with the storm and darkness increasing if possible. It was then that we all drew on BARKER'S resources to cheer, animate and encourage the ladies under the exigencies of the case, which had really become no joke. They all had to get out into the snow, knee-deep, so that we men, with the driver, could lift the sleigh round and get the horses again attached, taking our back track with a view of finding some habitation, as it had become absolutely necessary, to keep from perishing. We at length reached a farm-house, roused the family, got a fire made, and our girls restored to life, and a pilot to conduct us on our right road. We reached a public house at Potter's Corners between two and three o'clock, when we stopped and took another supper, and then pursued our way home, reaching Buffalo a little after sunrise, with the thermometer below zero, nearer dead than alive. But in all the trouble and difficulty here related, our drafts on BARKER were not dishonored; he was the life of the party. Amid all the suffering and alarm of the young ladies, he would more than half the time keep them in a roar of laughter by his wit and humor.

“Of this party of thirteen individuals at this famous sleigh

ride, which has ever been regarded by us all as an event of considerable importance in our lives, and always spoken of with much interest by ourselves and friends who were at the time acquainted with the facts, several of them have since died, several others are married and live here, and others are scattered about in various parts of the country, and will readily recognize this sketch of that sleigh ride to Hamburgh with BARKER."

The same gentleman says: "During my intercourse with Mr. BARKER of some twenty years, we have passed through many scenes together of mirth and frolic, scenes of business of much importance, and seasons of sickness, trouble and great difficulty, and I have ever found him the same kind-hearted friend, the same judicious counselor, and the same high-minded, honorable man."

It may not be considered irrelevant that I should now advert to the least attractive features in the character of him I am endeavoring to delineate. It is not surprising that a difference of opinion should exist as to the province of a biographer. All whose good opinion I most desire to retain, agree with me that a fulsome eulogy is exceptionable. But all are not agreed as to the course to be pursued to avoid subjecting myself to the charge of indiscriminate praise. My view of it, however, is that other than a general allusion to the exceptional characteristics of the subject of my memoir, I should particularly confine myself to giving, as fully and accurately as possible, his professional and political history. I have endeavored to conform to this opinion in a satisfactory manner. I have only deviated from it by introducing incidents illustrative of qualities we can all commend. I am conscious that Mr. BARKER had faults, for who has not? But, compared with his virtues, they were insignificant. Whatever may have been their nature, they were never justified, and, in the latter period of his life, were deeply regretted. I do not deem it necessary to define them. I ask no one to imitate other than his virtues. In con-

sidering some adventures of his life, all the accompanying circumstances should be weighed; the period when they occurred, the character of the customs which prevailed at the time, the peculiar disposition and attributes of the man and his after conduct. As to the particular character of them, it is of no consequence. The great point to be considered is, from whence did they emanate? Were they afterwards regretted? Were they ever justified? With these observations I shall take leave of this subject. I am conscious of my own rectitude in making these allusions, and think they are alike due to myself and him to whom they relate.

Youth, hilarity and freedom from care are generally associated together. In after years, when man reaches maturity and old age, he often looks back with peculiar emotion to the golden hours of his youth. Its pleasures and its thousand glorious reminiscences are still dear to him, and he cherishes their recollection as he would the memory of a pleasant dream. Social pastimes, however, did not divert Mr. BARKER'S attention from subjects of more moment. These sufficed but for his leisure hours. His intellect craved something more substantial. Previous to his leaving college he had taken no active part in the politics of the day, being devoted entirely to the prosecution of his studies. It may readily be conceived, however, that his active and intelligent mind could not long remain indifferent to the great questions of state which have divided and agitated the public mind from the foundation of the government; nor that he could refrain from being an actor in the great political strife for power and principle going on around him. He had, accordingly, investigated the origin of parties; carefully marked their distinctive characteristics, and from reason, conviction and inclination, he had early attached himself to the principles of democracy. At the time of his arrival in Buffalo, the state was agitated by the conflicting strife of three political parties—the Jackson or democratic, the national republican, and anti-masonic parties. In the eighth district

the anti-masonic party prevailed by a large majority over both the others; the national republican party was next in numerical strength, and the Jackson or democratic party was the smallest of the three. Actuated by no motive but principle, Mr. BARKER did not hesitate in which of the three parties to enroll himself. Regardless of interests, immediate or remote, and fully sensible of the hopeless minority of the democratic party in this section, he fearlessly enrolled himself in its ranks, and with all his energy, zeal and ability, entered into the support of General Jackson and the principles of democracy. He wrote leading editorials during the campaign, for the *Buffalo Republican*, the first democratic paper published in this city, and also furnished political communications for the same paper, over the signature of "Amor Patria." He likewise, though not upon the committee appointed to prepare it, wrote the first address issued to the electors of this county by a democratic convention. The Jackson party, as the democratic masses were styled, numbered then but a small band against an overwhelming majority of the dominant party in this section, but it was the nucleus around which the democracy have since been rallying, and their "corporal's guard" of those times has often subsequently proved that the phalanx of their opponents is not invincible. The address then penned by Mr. BARKER is rather to be regarded as a foil to the splendid efforts of his after-career, than as a production giving evidence of those greater abilities that so shortly afterwards were commandingly developed. It was made a mark to be shot at by the newspaper scribblers of the day, who were particularly severe in their animadversions. The address was, in truth, metaphorical to a fault, declamative rather than argumentative in style, and more in the "Sophomore" vein than consistent with the grave nature of a declaration of political principles. It was of the imagination rather than the reason—but gave evidence, even in its unpruned luxuriance, of that fertility of genius, which, in after years, when time and oppor-

tunity had developed and cultivated his native powers, made Mr. BARKER the eloquent orator.

In the excitement of the political warfare, which grew out of the anti-masonic controversy, there were many bitter things said on both sides. Mr. BARKER was particularly happy in repelling invectives of this character, by the severe retort, or the unanswerable sarcasm. On one occasion, when an opponent was denouncing General Washington and other great men of the revolution for having countenanced the "mummeries of masonry," Mr. BARKER replied: "Why, sir, a single kick from one of those illustrious men would have immortalized you."

I have often heard Mr. BARKER encourage his political friends to renewed exertions during the dark campaign of 1840, and at the first inception of the division of the party in this state, by reciting the events which transpired in this county in 1828, when the Jackson party was formed. He said the first Jackson meeting ever convened in this city was attended by only seven persons, but they pressed forward and made regular nominations for all offices in the county. A large hand-bill containing the nominations was printed, surmounted by an *eagle large enough to protect a continent*. He mounted a gaunt nag, with ample saddle-bags filled with the democratic posting bills, and thus commenced his first political pilgrimage in this county, bouyant in youthful spirits and firm in purpose, determined that the people here at least should have an opportunity to see democratic nominations, if they could not appreciate them. Nothing occurred to disturb his quiet avocation until he arrived, I believe, at Boston Corners. There he found a bar-room filled with village politicians, debating the heinous crime of voting or giving countenance to the democratic ticket. Mr. BARKER, with the coolness which was often manifest in his character, approached the landlord and suggested that he had a hand-bill which he wished to put up. The landlord, without knowing the nature of the missile,

readily consented. He then commenced unrolling the ample folds of the printed eagle and nailed the same at the top of the wall, and then followed along down the democratic nomination, and, as he drove the nails into the lower part of the bill, the sound was more dismal to the audience than was the hammer of the celebrated Luther to the Catholic bishops, when he nailed his creed to the door of the cathedral at Wittenberg. The audacity of the tall and graceful young democrat for a time confounded the anti-masonic congregation, and silence reigned. But, finally, after a long and breathless pause, a man of gigantic proportions, with a huge "paw," well suited to the size of the eagle, brought down with one fell swoop the bird of Jove and the democratic nominations. The blood of young BARKER was aroused at the indignity, and as quick as thought he precipitated the hammer at the head of the intruder, which brought him to the floor on the democratic platform which he had so ruthlessly torn from the wall. "Then commenced in that little bar-room," said Mr. BARKER, "the contest between the anti-masonic and democratic parties, with the proportion of thirty to one." After a few interchanges of bar-room courtesies, Mr. BARKER, through the intercession of the landlord, made a *compromise* with his assailants, but a number of the actors bore away on their eyes marks of the democratic influence. When Mr. BARKER was prepared to leave, he found that his horse, which had been fastened at the door, had been turned loose and had wended his way home alone, and when found was shorn of his tail and mane, and bedaubed in a manner I cannot describe. The saddle-bags and democratic hand-bills, saddle and bridle, were discovered hanging at the top of a sign-post, and found guilty of high treason against anti-masonry.

The manner in which he would relate incidents like the above reached the hearts of his hearers and revived the drooping spirits of his political associates.

The election of 1828 resulted, as is well known, in the

entire defeat of national republicanism and anti-masonry, and the triumph throughout this state and the United States was complete. And to this result, Mr. BARKER contributed in no trifling degree.

He was admitted to the bar in 1830, and commenced the regular practice of his profession. Immediately after his admission, he entered into a copartnership with S. G. Austin, Esq. The bar of Erie County at that time, comprised as much talent and learning, as perhaps any other of equal number in the state; and Mr. BARKER had besides to contend against the odds of well-established reputations, powerful connections, and settled business. He was, however, undaunted. He entered upon practice with the same untiring diligence and energy which distinguished him as a student, and he rose rapidly to the rank of the very first. He was appointed Clerk of the Village of Buffalo, on the second of June, 1829. In 1831, he was for the first time brought before the people for an elective office. He was nominated by the democratic party of the county for member of assembly. The election was not a general one, and no important questions were before the electors to call out a full vote. He, nevertheless, obtained a handsome majority in the city, and the opposition majority in the county scarcely exceeded eight hundred. This vote, when the attendant circumstances are considered, evinced his popularity in an eminent degree. His youth; his brilliant talents; his great personal popularity, and his ambition rendered him an object of envy to older politicians and they put forth every exertion to secure his defeat. There was also a strong and confident majority to contend against. The official canvass was as follows: Horace Clark, anti-mason, 2,287; William Mills, anti-mason, 2,066; George P. Barker, democrat, 1,459; Calvin Bishop, democrat, 1,216.

In June, 1832, the copartnership which had existed from 1830 between S. G. Austin, Esq., and Mr. Barker, was dissolved, and a copartnership was formed with John T. Hudson, Esq.,

under the firm of Barker and Hudson. This partnership continued until April, 1836. He was appointed Attorney for the City of Buffalo in 1832. He was the first attorney of the city. The same year, as soon as the rule of court permitted, he was admitted to the degree of counselor, and immediately after was appointed district attorney of the county. The duties of the office were then, as now, extremely arduous and responsible. The criminal business transacted in Erie County, and which of course comes under the supervision of the prosecuting officer, is greater than in any county in the state, New York alone excepted. Mr. BARKER made a fearless and able officer, and discharged his duties in a manner alike creditable to himself and satisfactory to the community. He, in fact, laid the foundation for a higher legal position. I shall here briefly notice the imperial manner in which Mr. BARKER addressed a jury. The annals of Western New York do not furnish his equal in that respect. Although he could enchain a popular assemblage by the vigor and beauty of his declamation, his *forte* was before a jury. With a tall and commanding person, he united the rare qualities of a melodious voice of great power and discipline. His pronunciation, although occasionally ornamental, was generally correct, and his command of language wonderful. His figures were always striking and oftentimes extremely brilliant. His manner was animated and impassioned. He portrayed the passions with an artist's fidelity. He thrilled by his towering declamation, fascinated by his persuasive powers; moved by his pathos; his "gentlemen of the jury" once heard could not be forgotten. He was effective both in the defense and in the prosecution. Indeed, many of his intimate friends in the legal profession are undecided where he shone best—in the attack or defense. His efforts were generally crowned with success. He seized upon the prominent features of a case at once, and then presented them with great perspicuity. In the retort he was ever ready. He

loved a joke. He indulged his facetiæ sometimes, even at the peril of his cause. His splendid efforts before juries are deserving of a better eulogy than I can give. Though few are in print, the name of those engraven on the memory of our citizens, is legion.

Mr. BARKER discharged the duties of his office until the December term of the common pleas in 1836, when he resigned, and Hon. Henry K. Smith was appointed his successor. Mr. Smith held the office until the seventh of June, 1837, when Henry W. Rogers, Esq., was appointed. Mr. Rogers, after serving two terms, was succeeded by S. G. Haven, Esq., in June, 1843. Each of these gentlemen are well known as able lawyers, and severally performed their duties in a satisfactory manner.

In the summer of 1834, Mr. BARKER was married to Miss Abby Coit, a lady of high respectability and very superior accomplishments. This connection was productive of much happiness which was unbroken until Mr. BARKER'S death. Mrs. Barker is a sister of George Coit, Esq., one of our oldest and most respectable citizens. After her husband's demise, she returned to her relatives at Norwich, Connecticut.

In the fall of the same year, Mr. BARKER was nominated for congress by the democratic party. This, it will be recollected, was the panic year. The election was a general one; party lines were strictly drawn, political feelings ran high and the opposition exerted their utmost strength. Mr. BARKER'S friends entertained no hopes of success; indeed, defeat seemed inevitable. He, notwithstanding, received two hundred more votes than any other candidate on the democratic ticket, and his opponent was elected by nearly three hundred less votes than any other candidate on the opposition ticket. The official canvass shows the following: Thomas C. Love, anti-mason, 4,783; George P. Barker, democrat, 2,466.

CHAPTER III.

Elected to the Legislature—His Legislative Career.

I HAVE thus far chronicled Mr. BARKER'S defeat as a candidate for public favor. I have now to speak of his success. Undaunted by previous trials; unshaken in their high estimation of their favorite; unawed by the overwhelming anti-masonic majority in the county against them, Mr. BARKER'S political and personal friends again placed him in nomination for the assembly in the fall of 1835. They gathered around and bore him triumphantly through the contest. It was a severe one. His splendid abilities and great personal popularity rendered his defeat "a consummation devoutly to be wished." Everything was brought to bear against him which ingenuity, hatred and envy could devise. His strength with the people, however, was too great to be overcome. His star was in the ascendant. The canvass resulted in his election by the very handsome majority of 1,180! In the City of Buffalo, his residence, where of course he was best known, and where the great strength and influence of the opposition principally lay, out of a poll of about 1,900 votes he received a majority of 1,212! The vote in the county was as follows: George P. Barker, democrat, 3,400; Chauncey Hastings, democrat, 2,442; Noah P. Sprague, whig, 2,220; Wells Brooks, whig, 2,652.

Thus, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, in the zenith of his intellect, he was called to take part in the legislation of the Empire State! Subsequent events fully demonstrated that his friends had rightly estimated his abilities. His legislative career reflected honor on Western New York, and placed his fame beyond the reach of envy and calumny.

The November election in 1835 was not very sharply contested in most of the counties in the state. It as usual resulted in favor of the democratic party. The following senators were chosen:

From the First District, Henry Floyd Jones.

From the Second District, Ebenezer Lounsbury and John Hunter.

From the Third District, James Powers.

From the Fourth District, David Spraker.

From the Fifth District, David Wager and Micah Sterling.

From the Sixth District, George Huntington.

From the Seventh District, John Beardsley.

From the Eighth District, Chauncey J. Fox.

All of these were elected on the regular democratic ticket, except Mr. Fox, of the eighth district, who was a whig. Mr. Fox was elected by a majority which did not much exceed 160.

The legislature met on the fifth of January, 1836. Both branches were strongly democratic. Hon. John Tracy, Lieutenant-Governor, made an able presiding officer in the senate. Hon. Charles Humphrey, was re-elected speaker of the house and presided with dignity. By the proceedings of a caucus of the democratic members of the house, held for the purpose of nominating officers for the session, I perceive General Lockwood, of Westchester, presided, and Mr. Barker, of Erie, and Mr. Wetmore, of New York, were secretaries. One hundred and five members were present and answered to their names. Governor Marcy's annual message was communicated to both houses on the 5th. The *Albany Argus*, of the 5th, speaking of it, says:

"The topics of more direct interest and importance—the increase of the banking capital of the state, internal improvements, relief to the City of New York under the recent calamitous fire, and the movements and designs of the abolitionists, particularly the latter, are treated with great fullness, and with a frankness and directness of manner,

becoming the occasion and the subject, and worthy of the character of a chief magistrate who has devoted all his energies, during an able and prosperous administration of the government, to the promotion of the welfare of the people."

The governor communicated on the 6th a special message to both houses on the subject of the great fire in New York City in December, 1835, by which immense loss of property was sustained and great suffering brought upon thousands. The citizens of New York had previously appointed Messrs. Philip Hone, Daniel Jackson, James B. Murray, and Charles Augustus Davis, a committee to wait upon his excellency and endeavor to obtain legislative relief for the city.

The message and accompanying documents were referred to a joint committee as follows: Messrs. Van Schaick, L. Beardsley and Wager of the senate, and Messrs. Wetmore, Dayan, M. H. Sibley, Luther Bradish and G. P. Barker of the assembly.

Among the standing committees of the session, Mr. BARKER'S name appears as follows:

On Ways and Means.—Messrs. Dayan, Morgan, G. P. Barker, Seymour and Carroll.

On Colleges, Academies and Common Schools.—Messrs. Wetmore, Duane, G. P. Barker, Yates and Bradish.

He was also a member of the joint select committee on so much of the governor's message as related to the constitutional rights and safety of the states in relation to domestic slavery. It consisted of Messrs. Mack, Wager and Willes of the senate, and Messrs. Judd, G. P. Barker, Duane, Cowdrey and Tomlinson, of the assembly.

Before alluding at length to Mr. BARKER'S legislative career, I shall briefly describe some of the more prominent members, and, certainly, it comprised much more than ordinary ability.

In the senate there were several democratic members of decided ability, although since the withdrawal of Mr. N. P.

Tallmadge, elected to the United States senate, there was no one to whom the character of the leader of the party in that body was generally accorded. Among them I may name Mr. Young, of Saratoga, and Mr. Beardsley, of Otsego.

Of Mr. Young it is scarcely necessary to speak, for having filled for many years important public stations, he is well known as a man of genius and extensive attainments.

Mr. Beardsley was a shrewd and skillful legislator, who, without pretensions to eloquence, exercised a prominent influence on all important subjects to which his attention was directed.

Several other members of the senate on the democratic side might also be referred to in this connection, if my limits would justify the introduction of all who possessed considerable ability and distinction.

There were but four opposition members in the senate, and they were all from the eighth district.

Albert H. Tracy, of Buffalo, stood confessedly in the front rank in the senate. Mr. Tracy is a proud example of the success which in this country rewards well-directed effort and honorable ambition. He is truly the architect of his own fortune. As long ago as 1818 he represented in congress the district which then comprised the counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Ontario, Genesee and Niagara. Since then, however, Erie, Orleans, Monroe, Seneca, Wyoming and Yates have been formed from it, and several new districts created. He was but twenty-five years of age at the time of his election, but so great was his industry and application to the practical duties of legislation that he was elected three successive terms. In 1829, he was first elected to the senate of this state, and at once took a high position. His experience in parliamentary usages, his great industry, his clear mind, his sound judgment and prepossessing manners won for him a senatorial reputation which must be enduring. He was re-elected in 1833, as an anti-mason, and during his whole

term fully sustained his reputation. Mr. Tracy, by his powers of comprehension, his acuteness, his high character and capacity for business, is indisputably qualified for a much higher position than he has yet filled. He possesses a highly-cultivated mind, and his style as a speaker and writer is forcible and elegant.

Mr. Fox was an industrious member, and is a man of fine talents.

On the democratic side, in the house, Preston King, of St. Lawrence, first claims my attention. He was an industrious and valuable member, and displayed, during the session of 1836, that skill and tact for which he has since become so widely distinguished. Though not an orator he is still a ready and forcible debater. His congressional career has placed him in a high rank as a politician, and he is known throughout the Union as the able defender of the Wilmot Proviso.

Our respected fellow-citizen, Hon. Charles E. Shepard, came to Buffalo in 1850 and entered upon the practice of the law. He has resided among us ever since, and is universally esteemed for his many sterling qualities. Firm in his opinions and affable to all, he makes a favorable impression upon those who come in contact with him. It will be of interest to my readers to learn that he was a member of the legislature with General BARKER in 1836, and was on terms of intimacy and friendship with him. Both were Jacksonian democrats of the genuine Old Hickory type. Both represented counties that had uniformly given heavy whig majorities. At the time of Mr. Shepard's election to the assembly he lived at Aurora, Cayuga County, a county which was known as Governor Seward's stronghold. He was nominated without solicitation on his part and elected without serious opposition. The second time he was elected by a handsome majority. His record in the legislature was an honorable one. He made a decided hit in a speech against the State of New York granting aid to the Erie Railroad to the amount of \$3,000,000, and

making Dunkirk its terminus. Thurlow Weed, of the Albany *Evening Journal*, complimented Mr. Shepard on this speech, saying: "Shepard, if you had made your speech on the third reading of the bill it would have defeated it." He was among the first of the leading democrats in Buffalo to join the republican party. Like the Van Burens, Silas Wright, George P. Barker, Philip Dorsheimer, E. B. Vedder, and other prominent and time-honored democrats, he was unalterably opposed to slave extension, favored the Wilmot Proviso, and consequently could not, without doing violence to his conscience, any longer act with a party with pro-slavery proclivities. In various instances he was recognized as a man of influence. He held the office of Postmaster of Aurora under Presidents Jackson and Van Buren, and also that of master and examiner in chancery, holding the latter position for several years, in fact, until the court of chancery was abolished.

Horace Gay, of Monroe, was a useful member. He is a gentleman of integrity, very fair legal attainments, and possesses literary acquirements of no common order. He was a warm personal friend of Mr. BARKER, and now speaks feelingly of their intimacy. He still resides in the City of Rochester.

John Chamberlain, of Orleans, was elected in a county opposed to him in politics, owing to his personal popularity. He did not speak often, but when he did it was with great effect. In his personal appearance he was a unique character. Negligent in dress; his every joint moved with a loose and irregular motion; his frame was stooping, and he had about him an air of abstraction that marked him for an original. At times, however, he would raise his bent form to an erect attitude and become the accomplished orator; his voice was clear and musical and his manner brilliant and impassioned. Great as was his mind, it had important defects. He was sometimes haunted with fits of misanthropy and melancholy. He was prostrated by disease for a number of years, and finally emigrated to an obscure portion of Illinois, where his talents,

which might have been the admiration of his fellow-citizens, remain unknown and unappreciated.

Francis B. Cutting and Prosper M. Wetmore, of New York, and Mr. Dayan, of Lewis, were active and valuable members, and are deserving of a more extended notice than my limits will permit.

Prominent among the opposition members of the house was Luther Bradish, then of Franklin County and now of New York City. Dignified and courteous in debate, possessing excellent judgment and an enviable reputation for integrity, he has ever ranked high in the estimation of his political friends and enjoys in a great degree the respect of his opponents.

Mark H. Sibley, of Ontario, is a ready and accomplished debater and first-rate lawyer. He was elected to congress in 1836, and was a member of the senate of this state in 1839. He has displayed ability in all these positions and was an active member during the session.

George W. Patterson, of Chautauqua (now lieutenant-governor of the state) is a man of intelligence and an able legislator. He was first elected to the assembly in 1832. He represented Livingston in 1836, and was an active and very useful member. He was also speaker of the house during the session of 1839. Mr. Patterson's career thus far has been honorable to himself and creditable to his political friends.

Richard P. Marvin, of Chautauqua, is well known to our citizens as one of the supreme court justices of the eighth judicial district. He was a member of the constitutional convention in 1846, and as a member of congress creditably sustained himself. He is a man of good talents, and possesses uncommon industry.

These gentlemen are by no means all on the opposition side who were members during the session, nor are they all who are deserving a notice. It would not be consistent, however, with my limits to extend this portion of the work.

It was among such men as I have feebly attempted to

sketch that Mr. BARKER acquired his legislative reputation. But his fine oratorical powers, excellent discretion, agreeable manners and integrity of purpose at once enabled him not only successfully to compete with them, but also to take and maintain a prominent position. I am sustained by incontestible evidence in pronouncing him one of the very first members of the house in 1836.* The first remarks he made in the house, of which any record is to be found, were made in committee of the whole, on Saturday, January 16th, on the "Bill for the Relief of the City of New York." The question pending was on the substitute proposed by Mr. Bradish for the third section. I copy from the *Argus* :

"He said that, although a member of the select committee which reported this bill, he thought it fair to state, and he wished to advertise that committee, that he had no particular parental feeling for it; but although he feared that the main object of it might be lost sight of in attempting to perfect it, he, for one, after some reflection, had concluded to support this section. If he had erred in that conclusion, on him rested the responsibility; nor had he any wish—he could have none—to influence the least action of the house, unless dictated by the intelligence and purity which ought always to guide their deliberations. He had no part to play in the matter; no point to gain, except simply to discharge his duty as a member of the select committee which reported the bill. With respect to the amendments he proposed he had only to say that he was not tenacious of the details of the bill, provided the house did not undertake to play Hamlet with Hamlet out. If the main object of the bill—the relief of the City of New York, and indirectly the relief of the whole state—were preserved, then his object would have been accomplished.

* In obtaining the materials for this portion of his life, I am much indebted to the courtesies of the Librarian of the Young Men's Association, of Buffalo, in furnishing me with the files of the *Albany Argus*, *Buffalo Republican*, and other papers and documents; and to several gentlemen who were members during the session.

“His friend from St. Lawrence (Mr. King) proposed to strike out this third section. He knew that gentleman too well to distrust his motives. He had known him too long to treat with disrespect any suggestion of his. But in this instance, it had been already shown, that his proposition went to destroy the vital principle of the bill, and that the alternative which he suggested would not meet the emergency. As to the objection of the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cowdrey), that we were giving more, as he believed, than the case required, he appealed to the delegation from that city to say whether they knew or could know the extent of the wants of the metropolis, under this calamity? The records of the past furnished no precedent to guide us in the estimate; but all knew that it required more to raise than to sustain; that as the speaker had well said, this credit was a matter of faith, and that if we acted at all we must act in that bold and decided manner which could alone set this matter entirely at rest. And did gentlemen think to avoid responsibility there? Let such remember that there was a sin of omission as great and more unpardonable than the sin of commission. If the house hesitated at this measure of relief, he begged leave to remind them that it would be quite as censurable and more unpardonable than if from the best feelings of the heart they should go too far.

“He asked those who presumed to estimate—for no one would presume to measure the extent of the calamity which had befallen the City of New York—how they could judge of the wants of that city in all their aspects and varieties, except from the representations before the house? Those representations came from a body of citizens, to whose intelligence and high character he desired there to bear his testimony, and whose conduct evinced throughout all their intercourse with the committee of the house, a scrupulous desire to ask nothing which the occasion did not absolutely

demand. With respect to the amount of relief, the house had no guide but that furnished by the committee of citizens, and the only alternative presented was to act, if we acted at all, with the magnanimity and liberality which the occasion seemed to call at the hands of the legislature. And at all events, so to act that we might not hereafter be reproached with having been guided by a contracted spirit.

“As to the preference expressed for a permanent increase of banking capital, although not opposed to that course on the principle advanced by one of the gentlemen from New York (Mr. Cutting), although he came there with no religious, moral or legal scruples against banks, more than anything else; yet he had not that ethical lens which some gentlemen seemed to have, which enabled them to discuss the difference in point of principle between a permanent and temporary increase of banking capital, and by which others affected to discover their right as legislators to disregard the real wants of one section of the state. He could vote as freely and cheerfully for a bank, provided the public interest did not conflict with it, as he would vote for the erection of a bridge.

“He was aware that perhaps something had been said in the course of this discussion, which might be thought extraneous, considering the subject in debate; but he trusted he might be indulged—and after the able remarks of the speaker he did not feel justified in detaining the house much longer, with a few remarks with reference to the matters to which their attention had been called. He asked the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cutting), and in a spirit of kindness, where he founded his opposition to banks in cases where banks were required? Was it because the system adopted by this state had anything peculiar in its features to excite distrust? Had not that system withstood the attacks of its enemies and the more dangerous sort of support—the faint praise of its friends? And what would be the effect of a contracted, artificial, unnatural repugnance to an

extension of the banking capital of New York, whilst foreign states were holding out more fruitful fields of speculation, and when men of capital were already driven by the paucity of banking facilities in their own state, to seek investments elsewhere? The effect must be, in the end, to render us dependent on foreign banks, and to drive from this state a vast amount of capital, actually required here, and to place it where it would be exempt from taxation.

“One word in reply to the gentleman from Ulster (Mr. Romeyn), for whom he entertained certainly no feeling of unkindness or disrespect. He felt constrained to ask that gentleman, whether, in his denunciations of all appeals to the passions and feelings of members, he had not himself made a direct appeal to the passions and jealousies of that house, when he traveled out of his way to warn the committee that after New York had obtained the facilities contemplated by this bill, the New York delegation might turn round upon the country and say that enough had been already granted and that they would grant no more. For himself, he had only to say to that gentleman, and to the New York delegation, that although the humble portion of the state which he in part represented had as anxious an eye to the action of that legislature as any other section, and that although there are all that he had or hoped to have was centered—yet that even could he know that the New York delegation would oppose every application from his constituents—still he begged leave to tell them that they had nothing to fear from him, and for that reason, and that he should discharge his duty regardless of the consequences. He appealed to the gentleman from Ulster to say whether when he took his oath before that table to do his duty as a legislator, he swore that he would do it, provided the New York delegation did theirs also? If the representatives from New York should oppose every object in which he might be interested he could find no relief in that circumstance from the

obligation resting on him to do his duty, not merely as a representative of a single section, but of the whole state. His constituents did not send him there to play a game of rush for legislative favors, at the expense of New York and the integrity of the house; believing that the legislature would give them all that their situation required without a resort to such means. If he were to assume to serve them by pitting himself against a particular section of the state, supposed to be unfriendly to his projects, his constituents would be misrepresented there. He could not enter upon such a course.

“The gentleman from Ulster, as he said, had brought to this question the experience of forty and three years, and a mind disciplined by professional studies. He (Mr. B.) left it to the house to say, judging from the gentleman’s matter (for he would not speak of his manner), whether, in the period of these forty and three years, the fire and ardor of his youth were quite extinguished. For no man, he presumed, on that floor would have imagined, but for the gentleman’s explanation of his remarks, that when he tinkered the heavens into brass and the earth into iron he intended to allude to the western deluge. If it would relieve the gent’s illustration in the least, he would tell him that on the spot they did not think it much of a shower after all. Nor need he be alarmed for the west on that score, for it could not well be supposed that the question now before the house, or any other act of legislation, could affect the season alluded to, especially as that season had passed. When that case should come up with a view to relief, then, perhaps, the figures of the gentleman might be in good taste; but here they could hardly be considered applicable. He agreed with the speaker that the effect of this bill was not confined to the City of New York. He did not ask the representatives of that city to concede anything in return. He stood there as the representative of his immediate constituents, it was true, and he considered it fortunate for them that they

believed their interests, as well as those of the state, to be identified too intimately with the prosperity of New York to be induced to go into the suicidal policy of cutting off the body to retain the limbs. As the gentleman from Ulster was at home on classic ground he begged leave to call to his recollection, in illustration of his course on this bill, the old Roman story where the limbs entered into a conspiracy that they would no longer support the sluggish belly, and to ask him whether his attempts to excite a country feeling against the city would not, if he found a response there, prove equally absurd and destructive to the interests of the whole? But he would not detain the committee longer at that late hour; nor did he believe it to be necessary, were it in his power, to say anything in aid of the appeals which had already been made to the house. But he would ask members from every section of the state to bury under a common regard for the common good all sectional or personal feelings, and to come forward and discharge their duty independently, and under the responsibilities which they owed to themselves, their constituents and the whole state."

The *Argus*, of the sixth of February, says:

"The material New York relief bill was finally passed yesterday, and has become a law. The assembly concurred in the amendments of the senate chiefly (striking out the second section) by a vote of 101 to 5. The bill, among other provisions, authorizes the banks in the City of New York to loan for two years a sum equal to one-half of their capitals respectively, and to discount upon it as capital to the amount of once and a half of the sum borrowed."

In order to explain somewhat the remarks of Mr. BARKER on the bill to "Expedite the Construction of a Railroad from New York to Lake Erie," I have copied as follows, from the second volume of Mr. Hammond's political history:

"On the subject of internal improvements Gov. Marcy stated in his annual message that the general fund was entirely

exhausted; that the Chenango Canal would cost, instead of one million, as had been represented, about two millions of dollars, and that the enlargement of the Erie Canal would cost at least twelve millions of dollars, and that he protested against pledging the state for any further works of internal improvement, unless the legislature would provide some specific means for the payment of the interest of the money which would be required to be borrowed. In the face of these facts and this solemn warning the legislature passed laws during this session for loaning to the New York & Erie Railroad Company \$3,000,000, and for constructing the Black River and Genesee Valley Canals. To these measures the majority in the legislature were goaded on by the whig newspapers and politicians, who charged them with being governed by narrow views and a secret hostility to all internal improvements. Against the assumption of these tremendous liabilities Col. Young, Mr. D. Spraker, and a few other senators, raised their voices, and some feeble efforts were made in the assembly to arrest the progress of these measures, but their exertions were wholly ineffectual."

The following are Mr. BARKER'S remarks in the assembly on the twentieth of February, on an appeal from the decision of the chair, on the final passage of the bill to expedite the construction of a railroad from New York to Lake Erie:

"He said he felt called upon to explain a remark of his in favor of laying this question on the table, and especially as it had been said that this subject had been long before the house, and that every gentleman should have been long prepared to act upon it. If he had erred in not having brought to this subject the examination which was due to it, the responsibility he was aware rested on him; but if he had erred it was from misrepresentation as to the proper course to be adopted to bring the question before the house. He had supposed that the proper course was to refer it to the standing committee, appointed with reference to their qualifications, to

examine these questions, and he had expected to have been guided by the light which that committee would throw upon the subject. He assured the gentleman that he had no earthly object in calling for an examination, but to come to an honest conclusion; and although others might be fully satisfied in their own minds on the subject, he could only say that they were more fortunate than he. But opinions were sometimes founded on a partial as well as a thorough examination of a subject, and long continued reflection sometimes led to doubts where none were entertained before. He knew not what examination those who spoke with so much confidence had brought to this subject, nor was it to be supposed that, acting as they did there under a heavy responsibility, they had expressed a mere off-hand opinion. He could only say to such that he acted on his own responsibility there; and although, as the gentleman from Ulster (Mr. Romeyn) had said, a precedent of this kind might lose us the \$800,000 loan to the Hudson & Delaware Canal Company, for one, he had rather lose eight hundred millions than to commit an error on a grave constitutional question like this. Such arguments had no influence on him. He was to act in this case on the lights of his own judgment, and independently of the views, however confidently expressed, of others. What then was the point? It was true, as stated by the gentleman from Oswego (though he stated the proposition in a sense perhaps too much restricted), that a corporation was a creature of the statute—that it had no powers except such as it derived from the statute. It might be said to live and move and have its being by statute. But he had understood that a corporation had all the powers necessary to a full enjoyment of the authority granted. Now his difficulty as to the power of corporation to a mortgage was this: It was not the design of the legislature, or of the corporation, that it should mortgage or convey its real estate. The corporation was to make the road, and its powers to raise money for that purpose were prescribed by its charter. It was to be built by

the stock subscribed. It never entered into the heart or minds, he trusted, of this corporation that they were to apply for a loan on giving a mortgage. The charter contemplated no such thing. Now here it was proposed that they should loan money and give a mortgage, when the original act of incorporation did not contemplate that the road should be built in that way. However confident others might be on this subject, he appealed to every professional man whose attention had been drawn to this subject, to say whether there was any one subject of judicial investigation where there was less harmony of decision—perhaps he should say where decisions of courts in this country and in Europe were more at war—than on this subject. There was no analogy between the corporations themselves, and no arguments could be drawn from the one which could be applicable here. Nor was it to his mind a perfect answer to the position taken here, to say that the bill merely granted the power to borrow—that it contemplated nothing conventional—that the lien was created by the operation of the law. He asked the gentleman who urged this argument to point out the distinction (for it was too subtle for him) between giving the power to execute and sign a bond and mortgage, and creating a conditional lien by the act itself. Were not the powers of the corporation in effect extended just as much in one case as in the other? If not, he had not fully appreciated the argument. As to this being a public act, because the school fund was to be increased by it, he did not think the argument of that conclusive kind that it had been claimed to be; for it was to be supposed that every act of incorporation was intended to benefit indirectly the whole state. Still he would not be understood to speak with confidence on the question before the house. He had no right to be confident, and he was not ashamed to own that, without more reflection, he could not feel entirely free from doubt. It might well be that the friends of the bill felt entirely clear upon the subject, but he asked whether in a case involving so

much doubt, and when it was expected as it was here, that the question would go to the appropriate committee, it was extraordinary that many should be unprepared to vote. For himself he was sure that the question was not pressed upon the house with a view to embarrass the bill. If he knew himself, he was willing that the bill should pass, if it could pass constitutionally, and he should in that case say amen to it as heartily as any man on that floor. All he wished was to give an honest and intelligent vote on the question."

CHAPTER IV.

His Legislative Career Continued.

CONNECTED with the legislation of 1836, it may be well here to note, that opposition to banking or other monopolies was not then, as since to some extent it has been made, an article in the creed of the democratic party in this state. On the contrary, after the adoption by the legislature of the safety-fund system, under the recommendation of Mr. Van Buren, during the short time he was governor, the protection and extension of that system was regarded generally as an important duty of the democratic party, and the multiplication of bank charters occupied a large portion of the time of the legislature, and the distribution of the stock under those charters was regarded as a legitimate means of extending party influence and of rewarding party services.

Most of the prominent members of the party availed themselves of their position of influence to secure, directly or indirectly, a share of the spoils, either in the shape of bank stock or bank offices, and this practice had extended so far, that it is believed that of the prominent members of the party at this time, either in the legislature or out of it, very few could be named who were not largely interested in banks. Even Col. Young, whose general integrity could not be doubted, and whose zeal against chartered monopolies has since been conspicuous, at this time had a large portion of his fortune invested in the stock of the safety-fund banks. Of course the organs of the party were ready to denounce as incendiary and disorganizing the movements now beginning to be made by a portion of the democratic party in the City of New York against a then very apparent bank influence.

This section of the party, then opprobriously denominated *loco foco*, small as it was, numerically, embraced, however, several men of distinguished ability and courage, and sustained by the powerful pen of the late William Leggett, succeeded in making itself heard and felt in the legislative hall at this session. It was the opposition of this party to the further extension of banks that Mr. BARKER had to encounter in the prosecution of his favorite measure, and in his speech, extracts from which now follow, if all his positions do not accord with what afterwards came to be recognized as sound democratic principles, it must be borne in mind that they were the prevailing doctrines of the democratic party of that day.

In Assembly, Tuesday, April 19th, Mr. BARKER, after some remarks in opposition to the bill to repeal parts of the restraining act—directed not against the measure itself, except so far as it was urged as a substitute for, or as an antagonist to, the safety-fund system—went on to say:—[*Argus*.]

“There is still another point on which I wish to say a few words by way of appeal to western members. And on that head let me not be misunderstood. I don’t appeal to them because I suppose they have any interests distinct from the general interests. I appeal to them because they know and feel our identity of interest, and because they can appreciate what I have to say. And now I ask every western member, satisfied as I know every western man must be, of the wants and demands of the people of the west in reference to banking capital, whether he feels justified in attempting to evade these demands, under the plea that to gratify them would be but to minister to the interests of a few individuals? Let me ask whether the sailor on our lakes don’t know the difference between fifteen dollars and eighteen dollars a month—whether the farmer does not know the difference between six and seven shillings a bushel for his wheat—whether the laborer does not know the difference between

four and six shillings a day? This is a matter which the people distinctly understand, and the man who believes that the cry for more banks emanates from the aristocracy, or from any other source than the back-bone of that section of the state, is mistaken.

“He knows not Western New York, and however honest men may be in supposing that the great body of the people are crying out against banks, they forget the wide distinction which exists between the feeling of indignation everywhere raised against an institution that was at war with our own, and to ward off whose attacks the strong arm of state power was put in requisition—and the safety-fund banks of this state. They mistake the intelligence of the people, when they undertake to identify the one with the other. They know better, and I will say that the man who strikes a blow at the safety-fund system of this state, touches the democracy of this state where they feel most. Yes, sir, were I called on now (as I have been) to say what that man had done who originated that system, the best answer I could make would be to tell the inquirer to open his pocket-book and see whether he had a safety-fund note in it. You mistake if you suppose that this is not a favorite system, and the man who has taken up a different impression, has derived his opinions from the mob, and not from the people. And will gentlemen prefer to take for their guide on this subject the opinions of those who are here to-day and there to-morrow, or the views of those on whose intelligence are suspended the destinies of our country?

“The man who raises his hand against the safety-fund system, permit me to say, does it on a responsibility that I do not envy. I will say further that even if the father of that system, could we suppose a thing so unnatural (which I cannot), or he who, sustained by what is called the six-million mortgage, should attempt to crush it, his arm would perish in the effort. The people of this state cannot be trifled with.

No man can lend his countenance to a system until the people have experienced its benefits, and then withdraw it at his pleasure, and at the same time recline on the reputation of having created it. I believe I speak the feelings of the democracy, and I may include also men of all parties, when I say that the people will never submit to that policy. And on this point, I say no more than I intend; I mean to be so distinctly understood.

“I regret that, owing to indisposition, I cannot now pursue this subject as far as I intended; but probably, during the course of this discussion, I shall have another opportunity to extend my views. But I do say here—and I address myself again to western men—that however we may differ in political sentiments, there is an interest paramount to that—and that is the duty we owe to Western New York; a duty growing out of the state of the currency, and the wants of the business community in that section—to which everything else must bow. Such as choose to sacrifice the interests of the west, either to views of policy or expediency, must take the responsibility upon themselves. I wash my hands of it, here and before my constituents. And I will say for one (and I hope the majority will sustain me), that I never will vote for an adjournment of this house (until another body better able to express the feelings of my constituents shall take our places) until banking facilities are extended to the west, or every bank charter in the state is repealed. I mean all that, too, Mr. Chairman.”

In Assembly, Wednesday, April 20th, P. M. The committee of the whole, Mr. R. L. Smith in the chair, had risen and reported on Mr. Yates' Bill (in addition to Mr. Cutting's), and refused to rise and report on the latter. The question was on Mr. Wilkison's motion to strike out the enacting clause, and Mr. Barker and Mr. Marvin had spoken in opposition to the motion.

Mr. BARKER addressed the committee as follows:

“ Mr. Chairman—As I have once had the floor on this subject, I will not detain the committee with any remarks, except such as seem to be called for as a matter of justice to myself, and in reply to arguments addressed to me personally. The arguments urged in relation to the subject generally I leave for the present, at least, to other members of the committee to answer, confining myself entirely to certain allusions which have been thrown out in the course of this debate, connected with me and my course in relation to this bill, to which I feel called upon to reply. And in doing this I would premise by saying to the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cutting) that the sentiments of kindness which he has expressed towards me personally, find in my heart a perfect reciprocity of feeling; but that at the same time, while I stand up here for my constituents, he, as he conceives, acts for his own, and that our course in reference to this bill is, in consequence, fated to be different. I vote as I believe the interests of my constituents demand at my hands, and I am not at liberty to compromise them for any feeling of friendship which I may entertain for any individual. Still, I will say to the gentleman, that were I to be governed in this matter only by personal predilections, which are my own property and at my own disposal, and that were it possible for me to be seduced by a man, under the circumstances in which I am placed, I would, without hesitation, choose him as the seducer.

“ As to the remarks I have made in justification of my course as regards this bill, they are before the committee. They are satisfactory to my own mind, and that matter I must justify before my constituents. I propose now, therefore, to confine myself as I promised to the allusions made by the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cutting) to myself, and to the arguments adduced by him in reply to what fell from me yesterday. I appeal to the gentleman himself to say whether he treated my remarks with perfect fairness when he said the only argument

I had urged was in favor of the Buffalo Bank? The course of my argument (if that can be called argument which was designed to justify my own mind) was to charge and prove upon the gentleman from New York, in the introduction of his bill, hostility to the increase of all banking facilities. I also said and attempted to prove that those who advocated this measure, and who would impose this injunction, were at war with our banking system—that this compound monopoly which he and they would introduce, would never be submitted to by the people of this state—and I asked the gentleman whether he could furnish a single argument against the increase of banking capital which did not go to the system itself. That question the gentleman has not yet answered.

“The gentleman saw fit in the course of his remarks to say, in reference to the withdrawal of the United States branch bank, that he had understood that in 1824 a bank of \$400,000 capital was granted to Buffalo, having in view the withdrawal of that very branch bank. Now, I ask the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cutting), the gentleman who called for argument but gave none—whether from his need of it or otherwise is not for me to say—conceding the fact that \$400,000 was granted to Buffalo in 1824, by way of banking facilities, because the branch bank was to be withdrawn, whether that act gave any more than \$400,000 to Buffalo? No matter what the inducements were for the increase of banking facilities in Buffalo, did it make more than \$400,000? Did it do more than supply the vacuum occasioned by the withdrawal, and did it necessarily dispense with any further extension of banking facilities to that city for all time to come? On this point, also, I shall await a reply from the gentleman from New York.

“The gentleman also remarked, in reference to the uncurrent money afloat in Buffalo, that it was a very easy matter to reduce that circulation to specie. Now, I can say that, however applicable the remark may be to the City of New York, it evinces that the gentleman's knowledge of the business of

Western New York is extremely limited. The business men of Buffalo are compelled to go into other states and, almost on their knees, beg of foreign institutions the use of their paper, on condition that they keep it in circulation. Yes, sir; to foreign corporations they are compelled to bow. And why? Because the wisdom of their own legislature refuses to minister to their necessities. Why, sir, the business man who should undertake to buy up this paper, for the purpose of returning it to its source, would find himself, among business men, an outlaw—a traitor to the interests of his brethren in commercial transactions.

“And here I must treat the gentleman as a lawyer. I said his argument was adverse to the increase of banking facilities. I plead to his declaration. If I traversed or departed in my plea, as a lawyer he should have demurred. But he saw fit to reply, and on fair legal principles his argument is confessed to have been adverse to the increase of banking facilities. The gentleman also asked—at the same time saying that he was not opposed to the banking system—that his bill was not adverse to it—why it was that Buffalo and other portions of the state were now writhing under this policy? Still, that was no attack on the system? Sir, it was not the fault of the system itself, but the evil the gentleman alludes to is the result of the want of the extension of the system to meet the constantly increasing demand for banking facilities. As well might you say that because a barrel of pork thrown in among a hungry multitude would be productive of serious consequences, from the inadequacy of the supply, that therefore the pork itself is good for nothing. The difficulty is that the system has not been extended sufficiently at the west; and because it has not been extended to such a degree as to meet the absolute necessities of that section, is that any evidence that the system itself is a bad one? I, for one, cannot see how the conclusion follows.

“There is another portion of the gentleman’s remarks which

I intended to reply to immediately. The gentleman said, in answer to my appeal to the house on behalf of the west, that he had shown himself a greater friend to the west than myself. He points to his vote for the Rochester and Olean Canal. He points, not to his vote, but to his generosity towards the Southern Railroad Company. Let us examine this subject. And first I have to say to the gentleman, that notwithstanding all the feelings of partiality I may have for those deeply interested in the Olean Canal, and although I do not suppose that my efforts would have altered the determination of the house, in reference to that work (and with the result I am content), yet had I been able to have taken the floor at the time, I should have brought all the capacity which God has given me to bear in opposition to that bill, and let the responsibility of that course and of this avowal rest on me and upon us in the west. But look at the generosity of the gentleman in reference to that bill. The common council of his own city instructed him to vote for it. The resolutions of that body were spread upon our tables, pointing out the advantages which would result to the City of New York, from the construction of the work; and it was even proclaimed on this floor that when that canal shall have been completed, Buffalo would no longer be the 'Queen of the West!' And yet the gentleman supposes that I was recreant to the west when I gave my vote against that bill, and speaks of it as a merit that he has obeyed the instructions of his common council!

"As to the southern railroad, my course is also before the house and before my constituents; and with them I am content to let it rest. With respect to the gentleman's own course, I should have never inquired into it had it not been put forward here as constituting a peculiar claim upon western feeling, on the part of the gentleman from New York. Having been thus paraded here, I may be permitted to remark that if it be true (as I have no reason to doubt it is) that he

has paid \$10,000 for stock in that railroad, it is equally true that that very railroad was eloquently advocated by a brother colleague of his on this floor, as a measure calculated to bring the whole western trade, without fear of competition, to the City of New York. Did the gentleman, let me ask, look beyond New York for a motive to that subscription? That is all I have to say on that head; for I will not say that the gentleman has a large fortune invested there in real estate. To suppose that consideration had any influence would be to impute selfishness to the gentleman, and that I can never impute to him.

“There is another part of the gentleman’s (Mr. Cutting’s) argument, if it may be called argument, that I regret to refer to; and let it be understood that if I talk with plainness it is not because anything I have said has left a sting here. I shall treat this as a matter between friend and friend, who stand, in their official capacities, upon an equal footing on this floor. The remark of mine to which the gentleman alluded, the committee will recollect, I prefaced with another, that I was about to say no more than I meant, and I now add that I meant no more than I said. I make that amendment to it. What was the remark I made that called out from the prime minister (as he would appear to be) of the administration, the sentence of excommunication? I said in relation to the safety-fund system, that it had come to be a favorite with the democracy of this state. That although it owed its origin to the favorite son of this state, it had not commended itself to their regard on that account alone, but that it had been tested by experience, and triumphantly tested. And I said that should that man, and I say so still, deep as may be the channels he has worn to the affections of the people of this state—should that man, I repeat, array himself against the democracy, as to a course of policy which they have at heart—and of this they will judge—and I say still, though without any apprehensions that matters will ever

come to that pass, that the democracy will say to that man, 'Thy glory has departed.' I take back nothing on that subject.

"Sir, let us see whether there be anything in this that would bring me under the ban of the gentleman from New York (Mr. Cutting). Let me ask that gentleman if even that man who has been well said to have filled 'the measure of his country's glory,' if that same arm which was stretched out at New Orleans in defense of his country should now be raised against that country, if that same voice which was once heard against a powerful monopoly, then preying on the vital interests of the country, should now be heard in its support, let me ask the gentleman what would be the verdict of the people of this state and of the Union? All I meant to say, and I repeat it, was that that man who supposes that he can array himself against the intelligence of the democracy of this state or of the Union calculates too much on his strength. I said, and I say it again, that I acknowledge no power here that is paramount to the will of my constituents; and if the gentleman argues from this that I am about to leave the party, and undertakes to say that I can leave the party, I have to reply, that until I leave the people——"

Mr. Cutting: "Does the gentleman attribute such remarks to me?"

Mr. Barker: "I understood the gentleman to say something like this—'Is it to be declared that because a bank can't be granted I leave the party?'"

Mr. Cutting: "My language was this—'that because a bank can't be granted I leave those I have heretofore supported?'"

Mr. Barker: "I say if the people want capital—if the democracy demand it—the representative assumes upon himself too much who undertakes to resist it, for that voice is omnipotent and will always be heard. So far the gentleman understands me. But I say further, that if we could suppose anything so improbable as that such motives or designs could

be charged upon either of the men I have alluded to, which I utterly deny, I do say as an abstract truth, and I care not where it touches, that the man who arrays himself against the wishes of the great body of the people will soon receive his verdict at their hands. Does the gentleman doubt it? Where now is he of Delaware, who once held the democracy of this state, as it were, in the hollow of his hand? By the betrayal and desertion of the principles of the democracy even that man has forfeited their confidence and is forgotten. Where now is the promising young man who once represented the democracy of the County of Orange? He, too, has received his verdict. And why? Because he arrayed himself against the wishes of the people, and no man can stand against that power.

“The gentleman also remarked that we (the applicants for banks) were standing here like Swiss soldiers, asking pay for services. The proposition was not stated affirmatively, to be sure, but in the form of an interrogatory, and the remark was not less pointed for that reason. Now I cannot accord to the gentleman even the merit of originality in that remark. I have heard it before. It is like a story thrice told in Western New York. It is, however, so far original with the gentleman that I have always been accustomed to hear it from those holding different political principles from those the gentleman himself professes. It is not a new song to me. But I have to say to the gentleman that I know not under what power of attorney he assumes to ask whether I am prepared by adhering to the wishes of my constituents, to prove recreant to my faith. I can say that I regard no warrant of attorney, unless it be given by the democracy of Erie, and I invite the gentleman, if he wishes to read me out, or, as the phrase is, to Vanduzer me, for the remark I made, to lay the venue in the County of Erie, and try the issue before my constituents. That is the only tribunal to which I submit.

“I have a few words more to say to the gentleman from

New York, and but a few. I ask him with what grace he calls me to account, as recreant to my faith, in advocating the extension of banking facilities? By how large a majority of those who claim to be democratic members of this House is he sustained here, who have stood shoulder to shoulder with him in his proposition to repeal the restraining act? I wish no answer. I mean no disrespect to those who differ with me in politics, nor should I have introduced the topic on this floor; but it having been introduced I am free to speak of it. I wear no screen before my breast, every portal of it is open to the gentleman, and if he pleases he can enter. If I have erred the gentleman shall not be put to the trouble of taking testimony on the subject. I will argue the question with him on bill and answer. If any expression I have used, if any doctrine I have advanced, be heterodox, I am easy of conviction, for I will furnish on short notice, and at any time, the evidence desired.

“I say, therefore, in conclusion, to the gentleman from New York (and my object in rising now was merely to make myself understood on this point), that with a full knowledge of all the responsibility of the declaration, I shall go home to my constituents as fearlessly as he will to his, and with the assurance that I have not disobeyed the instructions given by more than three-fourths of the committee which nominated me.”

The *Argus*, of May 26, 1836, sums up the session as follows:

“The legislature of this state adjourned this day at twelve o'clock. The session has been one of longer duration, and more arduous, than any which has ever preceded it. It extended to 143 days. The number of acts passed is 536—a far greater number than has ever been passed at any previous session. Among the laws are comparatively few of a public nature. Of these, the apportionment bill, under the new census, may be said to have excited as much interest and to have produced as much discussion as any other.

“Equal in interest and importance were the bills for internal

improvement. Among these are the Black River Canal and feeders, and the Genesee Valley Canal, and the bill to expedite the construction of the New York and Erie Railroad. The two former involve an estimated expenditure of about three millions of dollars, and the latter the loan of the credit of the state, in the progress and at the completion of the work, to the same amount.

“The local acts of incorporation for purposes of internal improvement extended to no less than forty-two railroad companies, with an immense aggregate capital.

“The question of the incorporation of banks was as usual an engrossing one. The legislative action on this subject resulted in grants for charters of twelve new banks, and an increase of the capitals of two existing banks; making an aggregate addition to the banking capital of the state five millions six hundred and seventy thousand.

“The calamitous fire in the City of New York—the cause of much legislation early in the session—produced also a species of incorporation heretofore but little known in this state. We allude to the mutual insurance companies. Of these there were twenty-six acts passed during the session.”

CHAPTER V.

Again Nominated for Congress—His Law Partnerships—His Military Career—Contest for Mayor—Election of 1840—Assembly of 1842—Democratic Legislative Caucus—Appointed Attorney-General—Correspondence.

MR. BARKER, after the adjournment of the legislature, returned to Buffalo, and embarked with zeal once more in his professional business. In the fall of 1836, he was put in nomination for congress by the democratic party. He declined the nomination, however, for private reasons, but he sustained Mr. Van Buren and the democratic ticket with vigor. In 1837, when Mr. Van Buren's special message was promulgated, he was among the first to give in his cordial support to the statesmanlike views and the bold and vital measures advanced in that admirable document. Though many from whom better things were expected, receded at once from the party—men who had been cherished and made by its bounty—he stood up amid the general defection which surrounded him, and fearlessly and warmly supported the doctrines so patriotically presented.

In April, 1837, Mr. BARKER formed a partnership with Seth E. Sill and Seth C. Hawley, Esqs., under the firm of Barker, Hawley and Sill. This firm continued till November, 1839, when Mr. Hawley went out, and the firm went on as Barker and Sill, until Mr. BARKER was elected attorney-general in February, 1842. The business transacted by this firm was very great, as all of the gentlemen connected with it possessed distinguished legal attainments. All of the gentlemen who have at any time been connected with Mr. BARKER as partners, speak in the highest terms of their deceased friend, and warmly commend his virtues and talent.

In September, 1838, he was chosen a delegate from the County of Erie to the Democratic Young Men's Convention at Utica. This convention was one of the most numerous, talented and enthusiastic bodies that had ever assembled in the state. Many there present had been distinguished for their talents and the public stations they had filled; and in comparison with whom Mr. BARKER was little known; the West, however, whose ardent friend and vigilant supporter he had always been, knew and appreciated his merit and abilities, and with one voice presented him as the one most worthy to perform the duties of presiding officer. He was accordingly chosen to preside over this noble representation of the junior democracy. Those who listened to that burst of true eloquence with which, on assuming the duties of the station, he electrified that vast assemblage, and who witnessed the dignity and impartiality with which he presided, will look back upon the scene as one of the most gratifying of their lives. This convention dissolved, but each member carried away with him admiration for the abilities of its presiding officer, and regard for his personal qualities.

I shall now allude to the military career of Mr. BARKER. By the records in the adjutant-general's office, it appears that on January 31, 1838, orders were issued, organizing five companies of light infantry, under command of Captain John J. Fay, George P. Barker, etc., and commissions were issued to the officers of the companies. They were organized into a regiment called the 10th regiment of light infantry, and attached to the 8th brigade of artillery. On February 12, 1838, an election was held for field officers, and Mr. BARKER was elected major. On the 28th of February, of the same year, general orders were issued changing the organization of the regiment to artillery, and commissions were issued to the field officers of the 37th regiment of artillery. On the 14th of August, 1838, he was elected lieutenant-colonel of that regiment, and commissioned as such September 11th. In June,

1839, he was elected brigadier-general of the 8th brigade of artillery, in the place of General Nelson Randall, promoted. At this election several officers superior in rank were competitors, yet so great was his popularity, that he received a large majority of the votes cast. He made a splendid review officer. Indeed, his appearance on horseback was commanding and quite dashy. He continued to hold the office of brigadier-general until his appointment as attorney-general. It is perhaps proper here to state that Mr. BARKER's connection with the military was attributable to the Canadian troubles of 1837, with the history of which my readers are doubtless generally familiar. The burning of the Steamer *Caroline*, and other acts, and the prospect of trouble with Great Britain, had created a feeling of distrust as to the sufficiency of the military force of the city to protect the lives and property of the inhabitants, and hence several new companies were organized as before related.

In the spring of 1840, Mr. BARKER was nominated by the democracy of Buffalo for Mayor. It was the first election by the people of that officer, and perhaps increased interest was felt in consequence. He entered upon the canvass under many and great disadvantages;—the anti-masons and whigs had long maintained a majority in the city, ranging from three to six hundred, the commercial, moneyed, and marine interests of the city had in almost all cases been with them; and this majority had, since the revulsion in the credit system, been confirmed, and perhaps increased by the accession of many of those whose ruin has been its consequence. The tide of speculation which flowed into the city with such rapidity and fullness, finally ebbed; and many, eager to lay the blame of their own folly anywhere but at their own door, grasped at the first specious cause which offered—that happened to be the democratic administration of the government; and upon this they laid the responsibility of their own acts, and made it the scape-goat for the sins of the people. Smarting under

their losses, and actuated by the hope of bettering their condition by a change, this class regarded the administration as a public enemy, and its supporters as their personal foes; their political became their personal feelings; and the ordinary virulence and bitterness of political contests were much enhanced. Added to this, the opposition put in nomination their strongest man; one whose residence was coeval with the first settlement of the country—whose acquaintance and connections were extensive, and whose wealth and weight of character added strength to their already great numerical majority.

It was against such adverse influences that Mr. BARKER, at the call of his democratic friends, entered upon the contest. It was, without doubt, the most sanguinary one ever known at our charter elections. The friends of each candidate exerted themselves to the utmost. Every influence which could be used was brought to bear. Few general elections have ever been so warmly contested. The eyes of the city and indeed of Western New York were centered upon the issue. He was defeated by *ten* votes as follows: Sheldon Thompson, Esq., 1,135; George P. Barker, 1,125. The array against Mr. BARKER was too strong to be resisted. His private character was aspersed; his professional integrity impugned, and his very honesty questioned by the opposition. The vote he received, all things considered, was a very gratifying one. He ran at an unfortunate crisis. That train of events which placed General William H. Harrison in the presidential chair was in motion. Few men would have run as well under the circumstances.

As a matter of interest to Buffalonians I here insert the vote cast for the several candidates for the mayoralty of our city since 1840:

YEAR.	DEMOCRATIC.	WHIG.
1842.	George W. Clinton. 1,486,	Isaac R. Harrington.. 909
1843.	Joseph G. Masten.. 1,657,	Walter Joy 1,197
1844.	Oliver G. Steele ... 1,389,	Wm. Ketchum 1,602
1845.	Joseph G. Masten.. 1,837,	Hiram Barton..... 1,538
1846.	Isaac Sherman 1,693,	Solomon G. Haven .. 2,029
1847.	Isaac Sherman 2,013,	E. G. Spaulding..... 2,192
1848.	Israel T. Hatch.... 1,855,	Orlando Allen..... 1,970

The election in 1841 was not contested on party grounds, though the democrats generally supported Mr. Harrington, who was elected in opposition to I. A. Blossom, Esq.

In 1849, the democracy were divided and ran two candidates:

Hiram Barton, whig.....	2,341
Elijah Ford, dem.....	1,466
Thompson Hersee, dem.....	481

In the fall of 1840, occurred the exciting contest between Mr. Van Buren and General Harrison for the presidency. Mr. BARKER, it is needless to say, gave to Mr. Van Buren his hearty support. He addressed meetings of the democracy with more than his usual force and beauty, and strove in every way not incompatible with honor to arrest the tide which was evidently setting in against his party. The Syracuse Democratic State Convention which nominated presidential electors, presented the names of Samuel Young and George P. Barker as candidates for electors at large. Two nobler standard bearers could hardly have been found in the democratic galaxy.

The election resulted in the prostration for a time of the democratic party, and the novel spectacle was presented of a whig state and national administration. The brief career of General Harrison as president is well known. Scarce a month had elapsed, ere the citizens of our national capital who had witnessed the splendid pageant of the inaugural cavalcade, beheld with sincere regret all that was mortal of him conveyed to his long home. Grief, deep and universal, was felt through-

out the Union. Orations, feeling and beautiful, were pronounced in our principal cities and towns. Funeral obsequies, imposing and solemn, testified in a touching manner the national bereavement. History seldom presents so striking an instance of the mutability of earthly possessions. Called by a large majority of his countrymen to fill the highest office known to our constitution, General Harrison was the center around which a great political party revolved. He was regarded with fond attachment by thousands and high and many were the expectations his election created. His greatest ambition was satisfied, for he sat in that chair which had been filled by a Washington, a Jefferson, a Jackson and a Van Buren. He was truly the "observed of all observers." Yet in one month after his assumption of the exalted duties of his station, he was laid in "dull, cold marble" amid a nation's tears.

The events which succeeded are matters of history. John Tyler brought down upon his administration the anathemas of the party that elected him, and very essentially aided, by his general conduct, the re-establishment in the state and nation of democratic principles.

Contrary to the general expectation, the November election in this state, in 1841, resulted in the complete and unexpected triumph of the democratic party. Calculating men on both sides may have anticipated the election of a democratic majority of the members of the assembly, but the senate, being a permanent body, and the whig majority in 1841 being quite large, few men before the election entertained the opinion that there would be a change of political power in that branch of the legislature so early as the year 1842.

Without enumerating the causes which contributed to this result, it is sufficient for my purpose to notice briefly the events which led to the nomination and election of Mr. BARKER as attorney-general of the state. Mr. Hammond, in his "Life and Times of Silas Wright," speaking of the assembly of 1842, says:

“There was an unusual number of men of talents elected to the assembly at the annual election in 1841. From the City of New York, O’Sullivan and Townsend, and Messrs. McClay, Grout, Jones, McMurray, etc., added much to the strength of the representation from that city. Horatio Seymour, from Utica; John A. Dix, late secretary of state, now United States senator from Albany; Samuel Stetson, from Clinton County; that learned and able lawyer, George A. Simmons, from Essex; John W. Tamlin, from Jefferson; John A. Lott, from Kings; Levi S. Chatfield, from Otsego; George R. Davis, from Rensselaer; the benevolent friend of popular education and of man, Calvin T. Hulburt, from St. Lawrence; the active and energetic Halsey Rogers and John Cramer, from Saratoga; Ziba A. Leland, from Steuben; Charles Humphrey, former speaker, and now clerk of the Supreme Court, from Tompkins; and Michael Hoffman and Arphaxad Loomis, from the county of Herkimer, were all men of distinguished ability.”

Isaac R. Elwood, of Rochester, was elected clerk of the senate, and Levi S. Chatfield, of Otsego, speaker of the assembly. Mr. Elwood is a gentleman of high cultivation, and possesses extensive and varied literary attainments. Mr. Chatfield is a man of superior talents and has exhibited ability in all the stations of responsibility he has filled.

On the evening of the fourth of February, 1842, the democratic members of the legislature met in caucus to make nominations of state officers. Mr. Flagg was nominated almost by acclamation as comptroller, receiving 105 votes of the 107 members of the caucus; but the nomination of the other state officers was attended with more opposition and excited feeling. The principal competitors against Mr. BARKER for the office of attorney-general, were Samuel Beardsley and Robert H. Morris. Mr. Beardsley had been the occupant of the office when the democratic party last retired from power, and his friends urged his nomination as an act of justice to him inas-

much as Mr. Flagg was nominated, who had also been one of the old officers. Besides, he had the influence of many leading politicians at Albany, and in other parts of the state. His friends were confident of success and did not treat Mr. BARKER as a formidable candidate. Mr. Morris had powerful friends in the caucus, who strenuously urged his nomination on the ground of the abuse and obloquy which had been heaped upon him by Governor Seward and the whig party for his participation in laying before the public the Glentworth papers, which had produced at that time great interest throughout the state. During the excitement Mr. Morris found a deep feeling of sympathy in his favor in the democratic party, which resulted greatly to his benefit in the legislative caucus. He was supported by many men of great weight and influence in the party in various portions of the state. F. G. Jewett, Amasa J. Parker, H. L. Hogeboom and John B. Skinner were candidates who were supported by many prominent members of the party. George Rathbun was also a candidate until the night of the caucus when he authorized his friends to withdraw his name.

It will be perceived that almost each democratic portion of the state had a candidate for the office, which rendered Mr. BARKER'S nomination quite doubtful in the minds of his friends, and his opponents considered it out of the question, but were willing to own him to be their second choice. He was, however, supported by many from different localities of the state, for his eminent qualifications and boundless popularity. No very prominent or influential men of the party originally advocated his nomination, for they were committed to the candidates from their localities. Sanford E. Church, of Orleans County, had been elected to the legislature, the only democratic member from the eighth district.

Mr. Church was a warm personal and political friend of Mr. BARKER, and at once entered into the contest with great enthusiasm, tempered with caution and cool judgment. He was the

youngest member of the legislature; but the fact that he had been elected from a county which was politically opposed to him, and in the eighth district, where it was supposed no democrat could ever be elected to the legislature, counteracted the effect of his youthful appearance. His strong common sense and consummate tact were soon manifest to the sagacious politicians then at Albany, and materially assisted Mr. BARKER'S election to the office. When in the caucus it was moved to proceed to ballot for attorney-general, Mr. Church rose and offered a resolution that the representation from each senate district should cast the number of votes of the members of the legislature from the district. This resolution was offered not with a view to its passage, but to impress upon the caucus the claims of Western New York, and thereby Mr. BARKER. Mr. Church addressed the caucus on his resolution with marked ability and earnestness. He depicted the struggles of the democracy in this portion of the state for a quarter of a century, with overwhelming majorities against them, and unable to have from year to year a single voice in a democratic legislative caucus, and deprived of all participation in the election of officers who receive their appointment from the legislature. He appealed to the magnanimity of the members of the caucus to do an act of justice to a meritorious class of fellow-democrats. His appeal met a magnanimous response. As soon as he had closed his remarks Mr. Rathbun went to his friends and requested them to vote for Mr. BARKER, and many who were before doubtful at once avowed in favor of his support. It was at once apparent that the tact and management of Mr. Church had set the current irresistibly in favor of the nomination of Mr. BARKER, notwithstanding the great and prominent names and influences that were arrayed against him. No rejoinder could be made at such a time, by the friends of the opposing candidates, which could overcome the popularity of Mr. BARKER, and as will be seen below at each balloting his strength was increasing until on the third ballot

he received 68 votes, being a majority. When his nomination was announced the audience in the galleries gave long and repeated cheers for many minutes, which exhibited the deep feeling which Mr. BARKER'S name carried among the masses. The nomination also was cordially approved by the friends of the various candidates, and the best feeling was exhibited on the result in every quarter. Mr. Church, for his agency in the nomination, received from Mr. BARKER the title of the *Democratic Member from the Eighth District*, by which designation he was known during the remainder of the session.

Ballotings for attorney-general in caucus:

	1st Ballot.	2d Ballot.	3d Ballot.
George P. Barker.....	26	37	68
Samuel Beardsley.....	23	18	2
Robert H. Morris.....	22	34	35
A. J. Parker.....	10	8	1
H. L. Hogeboom.....	6	5	..
F. G. Jewett	8	4	..
John B. Skinner	10	1	..

The election for state officers was held on the seventh of February. Azariah C. Flagg was elected comptroller; Samuel Young, secretary of state; George P. Barker, attorney-general; (Mr. Barker's vote in the senate was 17 and in the assembly 79, against Willis Hall, who received 10 in the senate and 26 in the assembly.) Thomas Farrington, at the same time was elected state treasurer; Nathaniel Jones, surveyor-general, and Henry Storms, adjutant-general.

Mr. BARKER'S appointment was received with enthusiasm by his numerous friends throughout the state, and especially welcome was it to Western New York. It was regarded as a just tribute to his genius and as an acknowledgment of his great exertions in behalf of democracy.

The following correspondence does honor to all concerned, and evinces clearly the high estimation in which Mr. BARKER was held by the bar of Erie County:

BUFFALO, February 10, 1842.

Dear Sir: The members of the bar of this county, in common, as they believe, with all classes of their fellow-citizens, have heard with emotions of pride and pleasure, that one of their number towards whom they have entertained high feelings of professional esteem and private regard, has been selected to fill the responsible and honorable office of attorney-general of the state.

They ought not to disguise from you, however (if indeed disguise were possible in such a case), that there is mingled with gratification at this appointment something of regret. Regret, that the relations which have so long, and so happily subsisted between them and yourself, must now be, in a degree, though slight we trust, less intimate; that the friendship which has known no political differences and in which official position can effect no change, should be separated by distance even; that the endearments of social intercourse, and the pride of professional association, cannot both continue to unite them to you. Regret, public duties should require you to leave, for a time, what they had hoped would always remain their and your home.

We have been appointed a committee to communicate in behalf of the members of the bar, these sentiments, and to express, without distinction of party, their ardent desires for your success and happiness.

As heretofore, they felt a common interest in your just reputation, they will rejoice as it shall be more eminent, in more extended usefulness, and in a wider sphere. They wish you, with one accord, personal prosperity and professional fame.

Should your arrangements permit, the members of the bar wish to meet you at the festive board before you leave the

city, and they request that you will partake, with them, a dinner on such day as your own convenience may suggest.

We are your friends,

H. J. STOW,
HORATIO SEYMOUR, Jr.,
S. G. HAVEN,
E. S. WARREN,
GEO. R. BABCOCK,

Committee.

To GEORGE P. BARKER, Attorney-General.

BUFFALO, February 14, 1842.

To H. J. STOW, HORATIO SEYMOUR, JR., S. G. HAVEN, E. S. WARREN and GEO. R. BABCOCK, Esquires:

Gentlemen—I had the pleasure, on the 11th instant, to receive the favor of the members of the bar of Erie County, through you as their honored organ, congratulating me upon my "recent appointment to fill the responsible and honorable office of attorney-general of this state," and requesting me to meet them at the festive board on such day previous to my departure as my own convenience might suggest.

I need not assure you, gentlemen, how deeply and how gratefully I am impressed by this compliment, so generously designed on the part of my brethren of the profession, and so flatteringly communicated by you, their committee.

I regret that the period to my departure from this city is so short, interrupted as it must be by duties incident thereto, that I am compelled to decline an invitation, the acceptance of which would give me so much pleasure.

The manner in which you have seen fit to allude to our professional and social intercourse, has awakened sentiments in me which I am without language to express and must content myself by simply assuring you, and those you repre-

sent, that I appreciate all your and their past and present kindness, and reciprocate all the friendship so happily expressed; and I am fully confident that if I, in any degree, possess those social virtues which you have so flatteringly conceded, it is because I have breathed the atmosphere which you created—and if I have made one step in professional advancement, it is because your example has inspired me and your partiality cheered me.

The strong and, I doubt not, sincere expressions of kind regard toward me personally, contained in your communication, gives me ample proof that your social feelings are of a character too elevated and too pure to be influenced by any diversity of political sentiments or professional controversy, and fully evince that the members of the bar of Erie County are indeed legitimate members of a liberal profession.

I beg, therefore, my brethren of the profession, to be assured that I shall carry with me the highest respect for their talents and friendship, which will not be changed by any future vicissitude of fortune; that my eyes will always be turned to the members of the bar of Erie County, as my earliest and best-tried friends.

With best wishes for your collective and individual happiness,

I have the honor to be your friend,

GEO. P. BARKER.

CHAPTER VI.

Presidential Election of 1844—The Secret Circular—Mr. Barker's Speech with Reference thereto—Result of the Election.

MR. BARKER, in common with most of the democracy of this state, regarded the selection of Mr. Van Buren, as the candidate at the presidential election in 1844, as an act of justice due not only to Mr. Van Buren personally, but also to the principles of the party he had represented and which had been temporarily overthrown by the great whig triumph four years before. Brought by his official position and other circumstances into intimate connection with men feeling the deepest personal interest in Mr. Van Buren's re-election to the presidency, it was natural that one of his ardent temperament should become strongly excited by events then transpiring, which were diminishing, if not certainly destroying, every chance of Mr. Van Buren's obtaining the nomination of the Baltimore convention. Chief among those events was the question of the annexation of Texas, and the position in which Mr. Van Buren had placed himself thereto. No doubt the position was taken under a clear conviction of duty. His sagacious mind foreshadowed the dangers of war with a neighboring republic, if the annexation of Texas was urged upon grounds of sectional interest, without proper regard to the feelings of Mexico, and in violation of the ordinary rules of diplomacy. Subsequent events have shown his apprehensions were well founded; but whether Texas could have been peaceably annexed under his line of policy is a matter of conjecture, which each citizen of our government must decide.

Those, and there were many such, prominent in the democratic ranks, who coincided fully in the sentiments

expressed in Mr. Van Buren's letter, considered the pressing of the question into the presidential canvass, as not required by the state of popular feeling, but as aggressive on the part of the slave-holding states, with an exclusive design of strengthening sectional interests at the expense of Mr. Van Buren and at the hazard of the success of the democratic party. It is not strange, therefore, that an act which, although demanded by national considerations of great magnitude and which subsequent events proved to have been indispensable elements of the great victory achieved by the democracy, should have been viewed, by those whose cherished hopes it must disappoint, as an ungenerous contrivance to prevent Mr. Van Buren's nomination; and especially as it was impossible for them to doubt that his election would certainly follow a nomination, or to credit the sincerity of those who, looking more calmly at the popular sentiment on the subject of the annexation and, therefore, measuring it more accurately, declared that it was impossible for the democratic party to succeed with a candidate not unqualifiedly in favor of the measure.

The irritation incident to so great a disappointment could not be expected to subside at once into an unqualified acquiescence in the action of the convention, however wise the course of events might show that action to have been, but very naturally showed itself in some acts of indiscretion amongst a few most warmly excited against what they deemed southern domination. The most exceptionable of these acts, more perhaps from the form of doing it than otherwise, was the getting up and confidentially distributing a letter known generally as "the secret circular," to which Mr. BARKER'S name was attached.

It is uncertain what degree of responsibility should be ascribed to him for this document. Probably much less than might be inferred from his high and influential party position. Indeed there is reason for supposing that he had little direct

agency in its production, and that his signature to it was conceded rather to the wishes of personal friends than to the conviction of his own judgment. But, however this may be, he was not a man to shrink from a responsibility which friends had brought him under, and therefore we must leave him, as he chose to be left, subject to the imputation of whatever indiscretion the act may be thought to involve.

In the view I have taken of this subject I am fully confirmed by Mr. BARKER'S own testimony. He "defined his position" in a speech made in Buffalo, on the evening of the seventh of September, 1844. The meeting was held for the purpose of responding to the nomination of Messrs. Wright and Gardiner, and was numerously attended by the democracy of the city. The daily *Courier*, the democratic organ of the city at that time, speaking of the speech, says:

"The speech of General BARKER on that occasion deserves more than the passing notice we have given it, more than the condensed report of the proceedings could embody. The circumstances under which it was made gave it a peculiar interest, and it is presumed that the same circumstances must to some extent influence his numerous friends throughout the country. His views have been so systematically misrepresented by the federal press, that it was due to them to be presented by himself to those with whom he had so long battled in behalf of the democratic cause, who had supported him through every period of his political career, who had cheered, encouraged and countenanced his efforts on the side of human rights from his first awakening to the duty of a disciple of Jefferson, and a servant of humanity, to the last struggle in which with them he opposed the enemies of popular freedom, that they might see wherein he had strayed from the republican fold, if he had done so—that they might shield him against detraction if he still held his old place in their full confidence and esteem.

"It is needless to say that this speech, though rather the

friendly converse of an old acquaintance, than any labored effort to be brilliant and oratorical, was eloquent and spirit-stirring. There were passages in it that awoke the fiery enthusiasm of the old democracy of Buffalo to a pitch that never but in the present canvass and under the circumstances could be paralleled, and there were also passages that almost brought unbidden tears to the cheeks of veterans in the democratic ranks that surrounded him. It was full of feeling and truth, and went to the hearts of those who heard it."

He commenced by alluding to the old relations he held to those he addressed, and the pleasure it gave him to meet with and congratulate them on such an occasion. He congratulated them and the democracy of the state and the Union on the expression that had been given of their wishes by the state convention which nominated Silas Wright for governor of New York. And who was Silas Wright? He was one, in the language of the poet,

"On whom each god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a Man."

He was one whose far-seeing sagacity, whose deep sympathy with whatever was beautiful and true, and whose disinterested and devoted love of country had wrested from admiration, for a garland to his name, the proud title of "Cato of America." He was the personification of American democracy, of that profound regard for the rights of the many, *as men*, which, glowing in the bosom of the sage of Monticello, sparkled forth from his pen and was enshrined in the foundation of our freedom. He was one who had just turned his back upon the highest office this side of heaven, who had turned his back also upon the highest judicial station in the country, but who freely gave himself to the democracy of the state, feeling the holiness of their claim upon him. And the democracy of the state, in the spirit of the patriarch who offered his son for a sacrifice, had nominated him to show to the Union the devo-

tion they felt to the common cause in this great crisis of republicanism, and to assure them, that although they sustained a deep disappointment in the defeat of Mr. Van Buren at the national convention, they gave to the worthy nominee upon whom the preference had fallen their whole and cordial support. They gave to the democracy of their sister states, for an example and encouragement, the choicest jewel in their possession as an hostage for her fidelity to the republican cause, thus assuring the triumph of the national democratic candidates. No military laurels lustered the head of this favorite son of New York, no startling incident in the history of his country was identified with his fame, but by the native dignity of his character, by the faultless purity of his public life, by his ceaseless devotion to the common welfare, by the unvarying fidelity of his attachment to democratic principles, he stood among the very first and noblest of his nation and his age, the pride of his state and one of the pillars of his country's glory. Such was the candidate for the chief office, and such the spirit in which the nomination had been made.

He said it was with emotions of peculiar gratification that he referred to the selection of Addison Gardiner for lieutenant-governor. If anything could add to the satisfaction the nomination of Mr. Wright had given, it was abundantly increased by the choice of Mr. Gardiner, a man of the purest character, of sterling qualities, and a democrat of that district, the old eighth, where they were born so, and hated federalism because they couldn't help it. The sentiment was innate. In Mr. Gardiner, the democracy of Western New York hailed a brother and a friend. One who in that station, or any other in which he might be placed, would deserve and reciprocate their fullest confidence. This nomination added to the assurance New York had given to the rest of the Union that her soul was in the great contest, that her vote should be bestowed on the Baltimore democratic nominees. These selections

settled her vote and settled the triumph of the country in the elevation of Polk and Dallas to the high offices for which they had been nominated. Again he congratulated the democracy, present and everywhere, upon the auspicious promise secured to the state and the Union by the nominations of Wright and Gardiner. He had intended to address them upon the great questions which the issue of this contest involved. He was suffering under physical debility, the consequence of previous exertion, and felt unable to do them that justice which their importance demanded. He would embrace a future opportunity to do so, and before the election would terminate, would tread his old battle-ground of Erie County over again as a soldier of the war. But there was one question on which it became him to make a few remarks to them, his old personal and political friends. He would open his whole heart to them and talk with an unreserved confidence, as though he were conversing with each by his own family fireside. The question he alluded to, it would be readily surmised, was the annexation of Texas. The whig press had systematically and grossly misrepresented his views upon that subject, and one or two democratic journals had seemingly given some credit to their erroneous intimations. He felt the flame of democracy burn as brightly and purely in his bosom as it had ever done, and his explanation of his sentiments would show that if he had erred, it was from *too much* and not too little of the democratic infusion—because he was in advance and not behind his party. If he *ever* fell, he would assure them that it would be at the *head* and not in the *rear* of their column. He was at peace with himself, and if he was not also at peace with his friends the fault was in his too much zeal, but he hoped better of it.

The annexation of Texas he regarded as a great national, a great American question. It could not, from its very nature, be a party question, because it involved none of those principles which were in issue between the parties. If the question was merely of the extension of democratic principles it would

have a different form. He regarded slavery quite in other than the light of a blessing. That institution, as it existed, he would suffer to remain as it is under the guard of the constitution, until it be removed by the action of the states in which it exists. He should dislike the extension of slavery over the whole of a new and vast country. He wished also that the public debt of Texas should be ascertained before the union with this country should be effected. He could not commit himself, with a blind and reckless disregard of what was just and right, to any terms of annexation that might possibly be offered. He thought the resolution of the Baltimore convention might have expressed more clearly the intention of its framers to sanction nothing but what was proper and just. It was liable to misrepresentation, and had been so misrepresented by our opponents. He should have liked it better, had it been more definite as to terms, expressing justice and honor instead of leaving them to be understood as conditions of the act of union.

The relations between Mexico and Texas he did not regard as insuperable obstacles. The title of the former was to be determined by her ability to enforce it, and if upon a precept to show cause she did not in a reasonable time plead recovery and possession, she was justly barred from the right to reclaim. There was a law of limitations in the code of common sense as well as in the statute books of the civil tribunals. The circumstances of the case were such that he should almost be willing to give her the length of an usual notice to quit, and let that be the end of it.

He believed and felt assured that the institutions of this country might be safely extended over the entire continent, and he did not doubt but they would be. The flight of the American eagle might be from pole to pole, and from sea to sea, and the stars and stripes be the banner of the whole broad dominion. They would be at some future period, and he thanked God they were abundantly able to protect it. Oregon

was ours, ours by discovery, by purchase and by conquest, and he was for taking possession of it and making short work with the pretensions of England. He would almost rather fight England without cause than any other nation with, but there would be cause enough if she persisted in her claim to Oregon. It was ours and we would have it, because it *was* ours, even if we had no present use for it. The soil that is consecrated by the rights of liberty must never be yielded to despots. It was bought by the blood of our fathers, and the blood of those fathers' children should preserve it, if needs be.

Texas must belong to the Union and be a part of it. Nature made it so, and man must confirm it. Its annexation was inevitable and neither could nor ought to be prevented. The only question that could arise was upon the conditions of her coming. It was desirable to have those conditions suitable and proper, based upon equitable terms, and adjusted in a wise and liberal spirit. The adjustment of those conditions he was content to leave with the democratic party, for he was satisfied that they would be just and reasonable, and such as would satisfy the country and do no prejudice to the national honor. It would be seen that he could not withhold his support from the democratic candidates, even if he differed with the federalists on no other subject than this. Their whole past course had been such as to show that they could not be trusted with the rights or the honor of the country. In the last war they were on the side of England, their whole policy was a British one, and even so late as within the last three or four years they had bowed the eagle's head in the dust in obedience to that power, and even bartered away for a song the sacred soil of the republic. How then could the settlement of this great question be trusted with that party? It could not, and it was the duty of every one who wished it to be settled in a proper and equitable manner, to place the power in the hands of those whose past conduct was a guarantee that it would be wisely and righteously used.

It was seen that he was not opposed to the annexation of Texas; that he was, on the contrary, decidedly in favor of it, and that in fact the only difference between him and the democratic party at large, was that he had expressed his opinion as to some of the conditions that should govern it, instead of being silent and leaving them to be broached when the time for the execution of the project came up. He had offended only in this, if he offended at all, which he could not believe. He left to his friends to say whether they approved of or condemned his views, but he could not consent to be judged by his enemies, and hoped only they would continue to abuse him, for praise from a federal tongue was the bitterest malignity of detraction.

Much had been said about a certain circular, a sort of bugbear with which the whigs had sought to frighten democrats from their propriety of demeanor, and this use of it had probably made it to be regarded as infinitely more terrible than it really was. It was never intended as the basis of a secret measure but only as the origin of a public one, if the leading democrats of the state thought there existed sufficient cause for it. It was prepared and sent at a time when it was apprehended that there might be many honest people in the state who, from a misapprehension of the views of the national convention in regard to Texas, might feel disposed to abandon the democratic platform and vote for Mr. Clay. The object of the circular was to ascertain if there were many such, and if there were, consequently a necessity of some public step to induce them to support the democratic nominees, Polk and Dallas, by showing them that that course was the only consistent or prudent one, as it certainly would have been.

The whole compass of its meaning was to serve and not to injure, to unite and not to divide, the democratic party. It was sent as confidential to avoid false alarm, the object being simply to inquire. If the result should show that there were doubts to remove and difficulties to heal, then a public step

was to be taken to perform that office. But if, as proved to be the case, there was no danger to apprehend, then of course there was nothing to be done, and the inquiry would rest in the oblivion to which it belonged. That was the whole length and breadth of the celebrated secret circular. There was no gall in its chemistry until it was infused by its foes. It originated in the best intentions: from an over-anxious, perhaps, but not unkindly meant solicitude for the harmony and efficiency of the democratic force. The event showed that it was not needed, perhaps that it was unwise, but it was born in good thoughts and ought not to be kept alive by bad motives. Let it sleep, in its folly if people will, but also in its innocence.

It was said by the federal press that he ought to support Mr. Clay. He support *Mr. Clay!* The thought was a libel, the suggestion a falsehood. Mr. Clay was not opposed to the annexation of Texas, he had said he would be glad to see it, and if he (Mr. B.) was as hostile to it as he was the reverse, he could not with any propriety support *him*, even throwing out of the question all the great and important issues—issues upon which he believed the destiny not only of a small territory, a few thousand inhabitants, but of this great country with its myriad people, depend for weal or woe—which were to be determined by this election. There was but one democratic course, there was but one patriotic course, and there was but one prudent course, and there was but one honest course, and that course had been his from the first. He had not wavered the length of a line, or a hair's breadth from it; and he should carry it out, as every friend of his country, of humanity, of all, in one word, and that word democracy, he hoped would do, and that was, by supporting the democratic nominees of nation and state, with his best ability and zeal, and putting up prayers in addition, if he thought them necessary, for the success of Polk, Dallas, Wright and Gardiner.

The election resulted in the triumph of the democracy in the state and nation. The Empire State had been the battle-

ground of the Union. Here the orators of each party had made formidable demonstrations in favor of their respective candidates. But Silas Wright's name was a "tower of strength;" under it, the legions of democracy were invincible. The principles of the democratic party were once more placed in the ascendant. I do not purpose to allude to the administration of Mr. Polk—to its many important events, nor to the divisions in the democratic party in this state, which became more manifest after his elevation to the presidency—in other than general terms. Without dilating upon the events which produced these divisions, it is proper, however, that I should state that Mr. BARKER from the first sided warmly with the radical or barn-burning portions of the party. On every occasion which was presented he took decided and high grounds in favor of the principles of the Wilmot Proviso, and the distinctive principles of his section of the party.⁴ His labors in favor of radical democracy justly entitle him to the honor of being classed with the lamented Wright and Hoffman. Like them, alas! he was struck down by death in the meridian of life, and in the prime of his intellect.

CHAPTER VII.

History of his Attorney-Generalship.

BEFORE alluding to Mr. BARKER'S career as attorney-general, I shall briefly notice the difficulties which became more palpable in the democratic party in this state, during the period he held the office. I cannot make myself better understood on this point than by quoting from Mr. Hammond's valuable political history. Speaking of the legislature of 1843, he says :

"No material alterations were made in the New York legislature, as respects the committees of the two houses, except those caused by the election of new members, in lieu of those of last year. Mr. Hoffman not having been a candidate, and of course not having been re-elected, Mr. Allen, of Oswego, was appointed to supply his place as chairman of the committee of ways and means in the assembly.

"The state officers—consisting of Samuel Young, secretary of state; A. C. Flagg, comptroller; George P. Barker, attorney-general; Thomas Farrington, treasurer; and Mr. Jones, the surveyor-general—were all of them radical in their political views, and warmly in favor of the financial act of 1842. Besides, as we have before remarked, if not opposed to the nomination of Mr. Bouck, they at least acquiesced in it with coldness and some reluctance. From their standing and talents they possessed great influence in the legislature, and over the minds of the masses of the democratic party."

* * * * *

"With men of such talents, weight of character, and political influence, comprising in theory a part of the state administration, who looked upon him with coldness, the

situation of Mr. Bouck may well be considered as having been anything but that of ease and quiet.

"The state officers, as we are assured by a gentleman intimate with them all, doubted whether the governor really and cordially approved of Mr. Hoffman's act of 1842; and his message on that subject was not satisfactory to them, nor, as our correspondent says, to those 'who, in 1840, '41 and '42, had occupied the front of the battle against the continuation of expenditures for the extension of internal improvements, but,' he adds, 'they remained inactive.'

"By some means it came to be understood at the very commencement of Mr. Bouck's administration, that a portion of the democratic party were opposed to him. This portion was understood as acting under the advisement of the state officers. Whether such was the fact, we do not know; but we do know it was so reported, and we have reason to believe that Governor Bouck gave some credit to the rumor. No doubt some of the applicants for office encouraged this notion, and were careful to represent themselves as friends to the governor, *par excellence*. If this disaffection was at first ideal, it soon became real, and began to be recognized. The governor, however, attempted to conciliate; and with that view generally made his appointments from candidates recommended by county conventions, or by members of the legislature from the respective counties where the applicants resided. By adopting this course, he appointed nearly or perhaps quite as many of those who were called his opponents, as of those who were known to be his friends. In this way the governor surrendered to irresponsible county conventions and to the members of the legislature, that patronage with which the constitution had invested him. He, nevertheless, was held responsible by his friends for appointing those they called his enemies.

"We have never known this temporizing policy pursued with success. We like much better the course which our

correspondent says Mr. Flagg pursued in the canal board. The governor should either, in all his conversations and intercourse, have repudiated the insinuations that the state officers and their friends were opposed to him, and waged war against the men who persisted in asserting that such was the fact; or he should have declared war against the state officers, and wielded his patronage accordingly. With such veteran political partisans he should have seen no middle course could be taken. We hope our readers will bear in mind that we now speak of *party policy* only.

“But the controversy which grew out of the appointment of a state printer as the successor of Mr. Weed, whom it was determined to remove (solely for party reasons), produced the sharpest collisions, and probably had more effect in creating and perpetuating the difference between the two sections of the democratic party, and attracted more the attention of the legislature and of the public, than any other occurrence during the year 1843.”

After, at considerable length, stating the history of the controversy and of the action of the legislature with reference to the public printing, Mr. Hammond goes on to say:

“On the twenty-first of January, a caucus of the democratic members of the two houses was held for the nomination of a state printer. But before giving the result of this meeting it may be proper to state that Mr. Van Dyck had withdrawn his name as a candidate for the office, and there was not in reality any candidate against Mr. Croswell. Those of the caucus who would not vote for Mr. Croswell, voted, without any hope of success, and we presume without any serious effort on his part, for William C. Bryant, of the *Evening Post*. There were 108 members present, of whom 66 voted for Mr. Croswell, 40 for Mr. Bryant, and there were two scattering votes cast.

“The next day the election was made by the two houses, in pursuance of the nomination. On the same day Ebenezer Mack, of Ithaca, formerly a senator, and author of the biog-

raphy of General Lafayette, was chosen printer to the senate, and Messrs. Carrol & Cook for the assembly."

Mr. H. then alludes to the establishment of the Albany *Atlas*, in 1841, by Messrs. Vance & Wendell; to its transfer in 1843 to Messrs. French & Cassidy; to the course it pursued while Mr. Van Dyck was contending with Mr. Croswell for the state printing; to the fact that on the seventh of February, 1843, Silas Wright was re-elected senator of the United States for six years from the fourth day of March, 1843. At the caucus held on the evening before the day on which Mr. Wright was chosen, upon balloting for a candidate, his name was found written *on every ballot*. He had in fact outlived not only opposition but competition.

"The feuds that prevailed at Albany, and among the democratic members of the legislature, did not to any extent affect the people in the country counties. They were, it is true, felt in the county of Oneida; but there the hunkers seem at that time to have held a majority over both whigs and radicals. However, Mr. Horatio Seymour, who was very popular, was a candidate for the assembly from the City of Utica, and undoubtedly added great strength to the ticket; besides, we believe both parties at that time in Oneida County held themselves bound by regular nominations.

"That the divisions in Albany did not affect the election in the state, is proved by the general result. Nearly three to one of the members returned to the assembly were democrats; and in eight senatorial districts, the democratic party succeeded in all except the eighth. The senate after this election contained twenty-six democrats and only six whigs.

Of a transaction which occurred in 1844, and which doubtless contributed considerably to widen the breach which then prevailed in the party in this state, Mr. Hammond thus speaks:

"Formerly the librarian of the state library was appointed by the governor, lieutenant-governor and state officers. In the year 1842, Mr. William Cassidy, a young man who had

many friends in Albany, as well on account of his own character as on that of his father, who, though little known out of Albany, with all the ardent, native benevolence of an Irishman, literally fed the hungry and clothed the naked, was appointed librarian by the votes of the state officers—Messrs. Young, Flagg and BARKER—against the votes of governor Seward and lieutenant-governor Bradish. He continued to hold the office till June, 1844. But in the winter of that year an act was passed constituting the regents of the university trustees of the state library, and transferring to them the power of appointing the librarian. It has been suggested by the friends of Mr. Cassidy, that one cause of passing this act was to procure his removal from the office. However this may be, on the first day of June, at a meeting of the regents, Mr. Cassidy was removed. We ought to have mentioned, that he had for some time before been one of the editors of the *Albany Atlas*; and it was urged, on a motion for his removal, that his time and attention were so much engaged in the management of that paper, that he did not, and could not, devote the necessary time to the proper performance of his duties as a librarian, but no specific charge of official negligence was made against him. The board of regents proper were equally divided on the question of removal. The *ex-officio* regents then present were, the secretary of state, Colonel Young, and Governor Bouck and Lieutenant-Governor Dickinson. Mr. Young voted against removal, and Mr. Dickinson for it. This cast the responsibility on Governor Bouck of giving a casting vote, and he gave that vote for the removal of Cassidy. The course of the governor on this question increased the hostility and irritation against him.”

It would be inconsistent with my limits for me to go at length into a narration of the dissensions in the democratic party in this state. Yet it seemed necessary to give something, by which an accurate opinion could be formed of Mr. BARKER's connection with them. In a previous chapter I

have given, at some length, his opinions with reference to the "secret circular," and have also noticed some of the causes of its promulgation. I believe Mr. BARKER was conscientiously opposed to the extension of slavery over territories now free. He regarded its influence upon the great elements of national prosperity as deleterious. He believed it was opposed to the genius of our institutions, and looked upon it as calculated to thwart all the efforts of the fathers of the republic to establish and perpetuate the blessings of free institutions. He was a sincere believer in the doctrine of free soil for free men. He thought, with some of our wisest and best men, that free and slave labor could not flourish on the same soil.

In 1847, he believed "the time had come" when opposition to slavery extension should be incorporated into the democratic platform. He felt, therefore, constrained to act zealously with the radical democracy in carrying out their principles. His conduct was, as might have been expected, rigidly scrutinized. He was bitterly denounced by some, and charged with *deserting the party*. To those acquainted with his history, this charge was regarded as frivolous, if not ridiculous. They recollected that when, years ago, anti-masonry swept over the western portion of the state, he was fearlessly battling for democratic measures and men; that from his youth he had adhered to the party in the darkest hours; they remembered how he threw himself into the breach in 1840, against the excitement of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too"—they could not forget his enthusiastic support of the ticket in 1844, notwithstanding Mr. Van Buren's treatment at the Baltimore convention; they could not forget how generously he had devoted his time and talents in aid of the democracy through a series of years. His course, therefore, caused most of his political friends to cling still closer to him. He identified himself with the section of the party which sustained, as he believed, the principles of true democracy. In behalf of those principles he battled with all the energy

and eloquence with which he was endowed. Among the pioneers, in the noble stand made by the friends of free soil against the slavery extension principle, his name must ever stand prominent. With that fearlessness and frankness so natural to him, he embarked in the struggle between antagonistic interests, and upon the issue staked his political prospects. I have often heard him speak in prophetic language with reference to the free soil movement; he predicted the day was not far distant when it would meet the cordial approval of the entire democratic party. Though firm and decided in his course, he was still courteous and kind to those who entertained different opinions.

I cannot better conclude this connection, than by noticing the Syracuse convention of 1844, which nominated Silas Wright for governor, and thereby secured the ascendancy of the democratic party in the state and nation.

Mr. Hammond, alluding to it, says: "The convention was held on the fourteenth of September, and the various counties in the state were fully represented in it.

"Mr. Heman J. Redfield, of Genesee, a hunker, was, it is said, at the request of Mr. Wright, unanimously elected president, and Judge Denio, of Oneida, and General Sawyer, of Schoharie, with six others, were chosen vice-presidents. Governor Bouck had instructed a judicious friend, who was a delegate, to withdraw his name for competition if he should think proper; and as it was soon ascertained that a large majority of the delegates were for nominating Mr. Wright, the personal friends of that gentleman urged that the name of Governor Bouck should be withdrawn, they having, as was supposed, reason to believe that Mr. Wright would be dissatisfied if his name should be used in opposition to 'any republican.' But the delegate to whom Governor Bouck had given this discretionary authority, upon consulting with the other friends of Mr. Bouck, was advised against withdrawing his name. The convention, therefore, proceeded to a ballot,

which resulted in ninety-five votes for Wright and thirty for Bouck; whereupon Mr. Seymour, one of the most distinguished and zealous friends of the renomination of Governor Bouck, moved that the nomination of Mr. Wright should be declared unanimous, and the resolution was adopted without a dissenting voice. Addison Gardiner, late circuit judge of the eighth circuit, was unanimously nominated for lieutenant-governor." * * * * "By the resolutions adopted by the convention they denounced a high tariff, a national bank, the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, etc., and they approved the resolutions adopted by the Baltimore convention. They do not allude to the annexation of Texas, other than by expressing their approbation of the principles put forth by the Baltimore convention. They probably designedly avoided any express allusion to that '*great American measure*,' because, among other reasons, their candidate for governor had voted against the Texas treaty in the senate, and since his return from Washington, and since the Baltimore convention, had declared, in a speech delivered at Watertown to a mass meeting, that he was opposed to annexation."

In order to explain Mr. BARKER'S position on what I regard as important subjects, I have somewhat deviated from my regular narrative. I shall now briefly allude to his professional career as attorney-general. Shortly after his election in February, 1842, he took up his residence in Albany, and entered upon the discharge of the responsible and delicate duties of his office. His immediate predecessors, Samuel Beardsley and Willis Hall, were men of great legal ability and were peculiarly well qualified for their station. They discharged their duties in a very satisfactory manner.

All that seemed strictly necessary for me to notice in this connection, is the manner in which Mr. BARKER discharged the arduous duties pertaining to his station. I infer the peculiar character of the duties of the attorney-general are

well understood. It is conceded that he exhibited in a pre-eminent degree those qualities for which he was noted. His intellect, as I have before remarked, shone best before a jury. In many important trials, he acquitted himself with distinguished credit, and some of his forensic efforts during his attorney-generalship are acknowledged to have been among the noblest emanations from the American bar. He was necessarily brought into competition with men of the highest legal attainments, but on all occasions he sustained himself with honor. His intellect seemed to brighten by the contests, and each encounter added to his fame. In the City of New York, particularly—a city noted for great professional ability, and numbering in its bar gentlemen celebrated for their soul-stirring eloquence, his commanding talents elicited from the press, of both the great political parties, the warmest encomiums. Indeed, the press throughout the state, without distinction of party, bore testimony to his success. His polished and kind manner rendered him popular among all with whom his official duties brought him in contact, and it is universally admitted that he honorably sustained himself throughout his entire term.

In February, 1845, the period for the election of state officers having arrived, Mr. BARKER was offered a re-appointment, but he declined, and John Van Buren, Esq., a gentleman of distinguished attainments, was elected his successor.

During the three years Mr. BARKER resided in the capital, he gained the esteem of all classes, and his memory is warmly cherished by the Albanians. After his retirement from the office of attorney-general, he returned to Buffalo, and resumed the practice of the law.

Since writing Mr. BARKER'S legislative history, my attention has been called to a letter (which I subjoin) written by the highly esteemed president of Union College. It was addressed to Mr. BARKER, and contains the most salutary advice expressed in the most felicitous style. Additional interest will

be attached to it, when I state that Dr. Nott has always entertained the warmest feelings of friendship towards him, and when he left Union College confidently predicted his future eminence.

UNION COLLEGE, Jan. 20, 1836.

Dear Sir—Since I did not find you in the other day when I called, the interest I feel in your success as a public man, will be my apology for troubling you with a few observations, the observance of which may be of some use.

Do not speak often, and only on important occasions. When you do speak be brief, pertinent and stop when you have finished. Speak rather in the furtherance of your own objects than in defeating those of others. Endeavor to allay the prejudices which naturally exist between the city and the country. Be courteous on all occasions, especially in debate and to your immediate antagonists. Never indulge in personalities. Never lose your temper, nor make an enemy if you can avoid it. Conquests may be made by conciliation and persuasion as certainly as by ridicule and sarcasm, but in the one case the chains are silken and sit easy—in the other, iron and gall the wearer. Though you point your arrows never poison them; and if the club of Hercules must be raised, let it be the naked club, not entwined with serpents.

These are hints merely, but a word to the wise is sufficient. And with legislators or others, a man needs to live one life to know how to live another, and since this cannot be done literally, we can only do it in effect, by availing ourselves of the experience of others.

Wishing you every success, I am, in haste, very sincerely yours,

ELIPHALET NOTT.

CHAPTER VIII.

Re-appointed District Attorney—Incident—His Health—Case of Pollock—Syracuse Convention—Mr. Barker's Last Political Speech.

MR. BARKER was again appointed District Attorney of Erie County in October, 1845, but his health was so impaired as to occasion interruptions in the discharge of the duties of the office.

He was for the last time brought before the people for an elective office in the spring of 1846. He was nominated by the democracy of the county as one of the candidates for election to the convention which was called to revise the constitution of this state in June of that year. The election was held in April, and although it was not perhaps contested on strict party grounds, the electors, nevertheless, generally voted in accordance with their political preferences. MR. BARKER ran ahead of his ticket, as will be seen by the following :

H. J. Stow, whig	3,308	George P. Barker, dem.	2,891
A. Bull, whig	3,265	H. H. Barney, dem.	2,641
Aaron Salisbury, whig. . .	3,299	Silas Tabor, dem.	2,572
Amos Wright, whig,	3,210	Jonathan H. Ford, dem. . . .	2,509

His vote, though a minority one, was still creditable when all the attendant circumstances are considered.

A friend of the deceased, a gentleman favorably known as a writer, furnishes the subjoined, which illustrates forcibly one of his characteristics :

"It is easy to perceive that the public character of a man so conspicuous as was MR. BARKER must have been well known and appreciated. So frank and unguarded was his deportment that the characteristics of his private life were almost as gen-

erally known as his public career. As he was entirely destitute of all pretence, he was never guilty of inconsistency. Many of his acts might be enumerated, which he little thought would ever become subjects of printed notice, and which, however trivial they may be deemed by superficial thinkers, prove the essential benevolence and generosity of his character. It is said of a certain lawyer that having taken a very small fee, he was accused by his brethren of having disgraced their profession. He replied that he had taken little because he could not get more, and that, little as it might seem, it was the whole worldly estate of his client. 'This,' he submitted, 'could not be called disgracing the profession.' In such things, Mr. BARKER might be termed a disgrace to his profession, but an honor to mankind. He was singularly disinterested in many of his most strenuous exertions; and if the walls of the prison could tell the annals of their various inmates, he would be known as one who, without fee or reward or the hope of any, would often devote his professional and oratorical ability to the utmost in aiding the wretched. Nor was he deficient in firmness when acting in behalf of the public."

As an illustration of General BARKER'S nobility of soul, as exemplifying unmistakably the characteristics I have claimed for him, I give the essential points of an incident as narrated by L. B. Proctor, Esq., in his "Bench and Bar of New York":

"In October, 1832, he was detained at Albany for two or three days, awaiting the arrival of certain persons with whom he had important business. At this time a Court of Oyer and Terminer was in session in that city, at which the late Judge James Vanderpoel presided. The next morning after his arrival, he sought the court-room for the purpose of passing away the time in observing the proceedings of the court. His route led him by the old Albany jail. Just before reaching that grim receptacle of crime and misery, two officers, having in charge a pale young man, apparently about twenty-one

years of age, came from the prison, stepped upon the walk directly in front of him, and moved in the same direction he was going. The prisoner was of middling size, slender in form, with agreeable, pleasant features. As he reached the street, the pleasant sunlight, the pure, soft air of that October morning seemed to exhilarate him, and his dark eyes glanced with something like happiness, as he lifted them to the clear sky, "where all things are free." The three persons walked with a rapid pace towards the court-house; they had proceeded but a short distance, when they were met by a very respectably-appearing, decently-clad woman, about forty years of age. The moment her eyes fell upon the prisoner, she sprang forward and clasped him in her arms, exclaiming.

"O George! George! My boy! my son!"

The sudden appearance of the woman caused the officers to halt.

"Mother, why did you not wait at the court-house for me?" said the prisoner, endeavoring to smother his emotions.

"Because I did not see you there, George; and I thought perhaps you might not have your trial to-day, after all, and I started to see you at the jail. O my boy! my darling!" said the poor woman, her voice now broken with sobs; "are they going to try you now?"

"Yes, mother, I am to be tried to-day; but calm yourself, I trust all will be well with me, for God above us knows that I am not guilty," said the young man.

"You guilty, George? you guilty? O no, no! you are not. You cannot be guilty, you are so good, so true—there—there now you look just as you used to when on your knees I taught you your first little prayer, in our dear old"—

"Come, come, woman, stand aside, and don't hinder us any longer; the young man is wanted up yonder," said one of the officers, pointing towards the court-house.

"O, sir," said the woman, turning to the speaker, "do see that he is not injured—he is innocent, I know he is."

"How do you know that, woman?" gruffly asked the other officer, "may be you can swear for him."

"Because—because I am his mother, and—and I taught him his prayers, and"—

"Yes, yes, we know all about that. You ain't the first good mother that's had a bad boy for a son, a real rum one at that," said the first officer. "Come on, my covey. Twelve men have something to say about your case."

BARKER'S progress was arrested by this pathetic scene, of which he had so singularly become a silent witness. Deeply touched by the appearance of the mother and the son, he followed them to the court-house. Just before ascending the stairs which led to the court-room the young man paused a moment.

"Mother," said he, "is Mr. Aikin going to undertake my defense?"

"Not unless we pay him in advance, and—and—we have no money, you know."

"O God, have mercy on me! What shall I do?" said the young man, losing control of himself in his mental agony.

"Come along; don't stop to blubber here. The court will appoint some one to defend you," said one of the officers, seizing the prisoner by the collar, and urging him up the stairs, followed by his weeping, trembling mother.

He was soon seated in the prisoners' box, to await the proceedings of the court.

The young lawyer followed the officer into the court-room, and seated himself within the bar. He had now a better opportunity for observing the young man, who had recovered, in a measure, his composure. The pallor which overspread his countenance, had given way to a slight flush; his clear eye, delicate and finely-molded features, bespoke intelligence, but not guilt. It was a face to be studied, and it was studied by BARKER. "If that young man is guilty of any serious crime, then I am no judge of features," he thought.

Court had not yet opened for the day ; a few lawyers were in the bar ; the officers in attendance were lounging carelessly on the benches ; some of the jury had found their way into their seats, and were conversing in a low tone with one another, occasionally glancing at the prisoner in the box ; while the spectators present regarded him as a being whose trial was, perhaps, to afford them some amusement or pastime. The circumstances which surrounded him—the place he occupied—caused them to regard him as a felon who only awaited a trial to be sent to a felon's doom.

Presently a loud rap announced the approach of the judge ; the usual proclamation was made, and the court was ready for business.

"Sheriff," said the district attorney, "is George Ames in court?"

"He is," was the reply.

"I now move the trial of George Ames, indicted for burglary in the first degree," said the attorney for the people.

"Has the prisoner counsel?" asked the judge.

"Have you counsel, Ames?" asked the district attorney.

"No, sir ; I expected Mr. Aikin to defend me, but he refuses now," said the young man.

"Why does he refuse?" asked the court.

"Because I have no money to pay him," was the reply.

"Then as you have no means to employ counsel, the court will see that you have counsel."

Judge Vanderpoel now addressed a respectably-appearing lawyer present, and asked him to undertake the defense of Ames, but he declined, alleging that he had pressing business ; the court then applied to another, who also declined ; finally there was no one in the bar who would undertake the defense. The judge appeared to be puzzled.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I do not desire to compel any person to defend this man, but"—

Just at this moment a small-sized, sharp-featured, shrewd

appearing lawyer entered the bar. There was a kind of avoirdupois look about him, and his eyes appeared like a pair of nicely-balanced scales, made for the purpose of weighing the amount of coin one happened to have in his possession. As they glanced at the person, his eyebrows were raised or lowered, in proportion to what he conceived the man had in his pockets, and they seemed to say: "Ah, he has so much;" or, "Oh, he has only a—ah, let me see again, oh, yes, has only a very little." He was well known at the Albany bar forty years ago, as a thriving lawyer who forgot everything in his fees.

"Mr. K.," said the judge, addressing this lawyer, "the court desire you to undertake the defense of George Ames, the prisoner at the bar."

"Ah, yes; your honors can always command my poor services in that way, but I have seen the prisoner before, and I think in view of his circumstances—his means—I mean, the nature of his great offense, that he had better plead guilty and done with it."

A sob of deep, heart-broken anguish, resounded through the court-room; it was from the poor mother who heard in this the knell of her son's doom.

"If the court please, I will undertake the defense of that young man," said BARKER, in a voice whose tones attracted the attention of every one in the court-room.

"The court are unacquainted with you, sir, and we desire that the prisoner should be ably defended," said the judge, in a tone that clearly indicated his surprise.

"If your honors please, I said I would undertake his defense, and I now say that he shall be fairly, if not ably defended, and I say more, he shall not be convicted unless his guilt be made apparent."

"Do you desire the assistance of Mr. K.?" asked the judge.

"No; if your honors please, I will assume the entire responsibility of this defense."

The judge signified his assent.

Edward Livingston was then District Attorney of Albany County. He was learned and eminent in his profession, eloquent at the bar, a pleasing speaker in the popular assembly, a politician of rare capacity and many executive endowments, a formidable prosecuting officer. He represented Albany in the legislature several years, and in 1837 was chosen Speaker of the Assembly, discharging the duties of that distinguished position with marked ability.

Such was the man with whom the young lawyer was about to contend.

"I ask your honors to postpone this trial until to-morrow morning, to give me an opportunity of consulting with the prisoner," said BARKER.

As Mr. Livingston made no opposition to this motion, it was granted.

Language cannot describe the surprise, joy and gratitude of the young man and his mother at this unexpected appearance of a defender. A short consultation with them, convinced the lawyer that his client was not guilty, although he was surrounded by a train of circumstances which seemed to point with almost indubitable certainty to him, as a young but hardened criminal.

He was the only son of the poor woman present, and she was a widow. Their residence was at Fort Ann, in the County of Washington. A few days before the commission of the crime with which he was charged, he came to Albany for the purpose of obtaining employment; here he soon made the acquaintance of a very friendly-appearing man, who apparently took much interest in him and kindly offered to assist him in obtaining employment. One evening he was invited by this friend to accompany him and examine some personal property which was then in a certain building that he had rented. Although it was quite late when this proposal was made, George assented. On their way, his friend overtook two

persons with whom he was acquainted, and whom he invited to accompany them; they consented; and in a few minutes the young man and his companions found themselves in the rear of a large building. His friend now informed him that he greatly desired to enter the building, which was his store; but as he had forgot the key, he produced a small iron bar which he handed to George, directing him to pry open the shutters to one of the windows and force his way into the building, promising to reward him very liberally for his trouble. In a moment, the young man understood that he was in the presence of burglars, and, horror-stricken at the thought, he attempted to rush from their presence; but ere he had made two steps, he received a heavy blow upon the head, which felled him to the earth insensible. When he returned to consciousness, he was at the police office, with a bandage about his head. As soon as he was able to be moved, he was conducted before a magistrate, and his examination took place. From the testimony, he learned that the building was broken open and entered, and that he was one of the persons charged with the crime of breaking it open. All of the wretches succeeded in making their escape, excepting one who was arrested the next morning; turning state's evidence, he implicated young Ames in the crime, alleging that he entered the store, that while there, he stumbled over some object and fell; his head striking the corner of the counter rendered him insensible, that when they made their exit from the building they removed their wounded companion, intending to convey him to a place of secrecy until he recovered; but when they had proceeded a few paces from the building they were alarmed and hastily fled, leaving him on the ground where he was discovered by the police. Such was the evidence of the man before the magistrate.

Soon after his incarceration, George wrote to his mother; the poor woman came to the city, employed the lawyer who has been referred to, but because they had no funds to pay

him he abandoned the defense. By a singular intervention of Providence, GEORGE P. BARKER had now become his counsel. The story of the young man carried conviction with it, and aroused all the generous sympathy of the young lawyer's nature. Ascertaining the name of the surgeon who dressed the wound of Ames, he immediately called upon him; he was a gentleman of intelligence and skill; he distinctly recollected the circumstance of dressing the prisoner's head, and the nature of his wound, and did not hesitate to state that it could not have been inflicted by a fall—that it must have been the result of a blow from a club or some heavy instrument.

The next morning the trial began. Mr. Livingston conducted the prosecution with great ability; he firmly believed the prisoner guilty, and therefore omitted nothing that tended to convict him. Entering upon the trial without any introduction to the young stranger who thus singularly became his opponent, he did not stop to consider or care who he was. The case, however, had proceeded but a short time before he was aware that he had no common intellect to deal with, and he conceived a high respect for him, whoever he might be.

The cross-examination of the convict witness was most searching and effectual. The keen eyes of BARKER seemed to pierce his very soul; from the commencement to the end they were not removed from him. At first, he sustained himself with a balance and composure which seemed to baffle his interrogator, but at length he stumbled, hesitated, and became confused, and when he left the witness box, it was evident that his testimony had been materially shaken. The cross-examination of the proprietor of the store which had been entered, elicited the fact that no blood was found in the store; that the corner of the counter against which the witness had testified Ames had fallen, did not exhibit the least appearance of any such occurrence. The officer, who first discovered the prisoner, on his cross-examination testified

that on the spot where his head rested a large pool of blood had gathered.

At length the district attorney rested. BARKER, in a short, plain and concise statement, presented the theory of his defense to the jury. The only witness whom he called was the surgeon, whose evidence corresponded with the statement he had previously made, establishing the fact that the wound on the head of Ames could not have been made as the witness for the people had sworn—that it was inflicted by a club, or some heavy instrument, and he gave his reasons on which his opinion was founded, clearly and intelligibly.

With this evidence, the young lawyer rested his case and went to the jury. In his whole subsequent professional career, he never made a more successful or a more brilliant defense. In the language of one of the journals of the day, "his summing up of the evidence was a splendid effort." Many of the jurors were present when he made his generous offer to defend the prisoner, and they were conscious that he was acting from the sympathy and generosity of his nature; they therefore believed him sincere in his statements. He contended that there was no evidence whatever against the young man, except that he was found wounded near the place where the crime was committed—that the uncorroborated evidence of the convict witness was not sufficient to convict; besides, that witness was contradicted by the surgeon, and also the circumstances. He dwelt with much emphasis upon the fact that no blood was discovered in the store, because the wound was of such a nature that it must have bled copiously when it was first received. That a large quantity of blood was discovered under his head when found by the officer, established the fact that he received the blow where he fell; especially as there was no evidence that blood was found in any other place.

Those who knew GEORGE P. BARKER, can well understand the nature of his address and its effect upon the jury. Mr. Livingston's reply was all that could be expected from a

lawyer so distinguished ; but the defense of his opponent had taken him by surprise ; it was an effort which would have been creditable to the most eminent member of the Albany bar, and he saw that it had made an impression upon the jury. His argument was keen, searching, and profound. The charge of Judge Vanderpoel was, as the charges of that learned and able judge always were, a close adhesion to the law and his duty, impartially and fairly discharged.

The jury retired, and after an hour's absence, returned into court with a verdict of not guilty. The great, the rich reward of BARKER was the almost frantic joy with which the verdict was received by the mother and son.

"The God of the widow and the orphan has sent you to us, sir, in our distress, and His blessing will descend upon you through all your days. We have no money with which to reward you ; I have seen better days, but now I can only thank you from the very depth of my heart of hearts," said Mrs. Ames, on taking leave of Mr. BARKER.

"Some time I shall reward you for what you have done for me," said young Ames ; the glittering drops which stood in his eyes, evidenced his deep gratitude ; and thus mother and son took their leave of their generous benefactor.

Years passed away, and this event was nearly forgotten by BARKER, in the vicissitudes of his professional and political life. One morning in the winter of 1836, while he was member of assembly, a well-dressed, gentlemanly-appearing man called at his room in Albany.

"Do you not remember me, Mr. Barker?" said he.

"I do not," was the reply.

"My name is Ames—George Ames—whom you once defended against a serious charge in this city," said the man.

Another glance at his visitor convinced BARKER that the prisoner whom he had defended for burglary, at Albany, was before him.

"I learned that you were in the city, and I could not refrain from calling upon you," said Ames.

He then in a few words informed his benefactor that he was a well-to-do farmer, that fortune had smiled upon him and given him prosperity. After conversing a half hour, he arose to take his leave.

"Here is a small package which my mother, my wife, and myself have made up for you. Do not open it until I have left—I trust it will convince you that my words to you have not been forgotten."

He took his leave and BARKER opened the package; to his surprise, he found it contained a bank-bill for two hundred dollars.

Ames and his defender have both passed beyond the trials of earth; but a son of the former still survives, who treasures the name of GEORGE P. BARKER with a sort of poetic reverence. To him the author is indebted for one of the most touching and agreeable incidents in the life of a distinguished lawyer. The trial which has been described resulted in a life friendship between Livingston and Barker."

The writer will always remember the words of a colored man, whom Mr. BARKER assisted, but who underwent the extreme penalty of the law. "Mr. BARKER," said he, "gives me his heart—he gives me himself. I have nothing to pay him with, but if I were the richest man in the country, he could not be more attentive to me, or exert himself more in my behalf." Such deeds as these form his epitaph, and when the recording angel shall contradict the words on many an ostentatious tomb-stone, these so slightly known shall duly appear, as lawyers say, to have been "placed on record."

The last words I heard him utter were when, passing hurriedly through the hall, being busily occupied in the discharge of his laborious duties as district attorney, a poor woman stopped him and pleaded poverty as a reason why the county should not press a certain claim against her. Many

men would have given a hasty or petulant answer. But he stopped patiently, and in the mild and kind tones of the voice we so well remember, giving each word its deliberate emphasis, assured her that "if she was so poor as she said she was, he would see that the county should deal leniently with her."

How many to whom this notice may appear too trivial for publication, will read it and coolly say or think, "Well, that was just BARKER'S way;" whilst he who accurately observes and reflects upon the nature of mankind will be reminded, in words similar to those of Voltaire, that "these may be little matters, but they portray the character."

It now seems appropriate, that I should advert to Mr. BARKER'S health, which about this time began sensibly to fail. From 1833 (as I am informed by Dr. Charles Winne, who was for several years his attending physician), he was subject to frequent attacks of colic. His natural buoyancy of disposition and zeal in the professional engagements which a large private business and official duties pressed upon him, caused him to disregard generally the injurious effects of great mental and bodily exertion in a depressed state of health. During the winter, spring and summer of 1846 all the symptoms of disease seemed to be aggravated and his health was evidently much impaired. Although he made extraordinary and injurious efforts to attend to his professional duties, he was subject to repeated interruptions from the failure of his bodily strength. On the nineteenth of September, 1846, while in court, he was seized with a convulsive fit of nearly half an hour's duration, followed by heavy sleep. He was at the time removed from the court-room to the jury-room in the same building, and the necessary medical aid was rendered. In some two hours from the time of the seizure he was so far recovered as to be able to be removed to the Mansion House, where he boarded with his family. His recovery from the effects of this shock was slow, but it promised to be perfect. His mental faculties were not perceptibly impaired in their clearness, but there seemed

ever after in his best state of health to be a depression that depreciated their force and effectiveness. This was more obvious after a recurrence of a similar attack, on the twentieth of March, 1847. This followed a protracted labor in court of four weeks duration, in which many exciting causes were tried, and his convalescence was consequently very slow. He continued quite feeble up to the time of leaving Buffalo on a journey. He was also subject to great depression of spirits, and his mental faculties, though still clear, partook in a measure of the feebleness of his body. In the early part of June, 1847, increased debility and a threatened renewal of spasms induced him, at the solicitation of his friends, to withdraw from business and its cares and seek for renewed health in traveling. He accordingly proceeded to Litchfield and Norwich, Connecticut, where he spent some time among Mrs. Barker's relatives; he proceeded thence to Rindge, and visited his mother, and from thence to Halifax, where he spent much time at the fishing banks. During this time his health very much improved. He was subject to no sickness, except a brief period of pain from the accident of dislocating his shoulder while on a fishing excursion. His wonted cheerfulness returned, and with it the hope that he could again pursue the profession he loved. He returned to Buffalo in August, and received the hearty congratulations of his friends on his restored health and improved appearance. He at once resumed the duties of his profession and of prosecuting attorney (of which latter duties he had been kindly relieved by volunteering friends), but it was soon perceptible that a few weeks exertion had destroyed all that he had gained during his absence.

One of the last forensic efforts of Mr. BARKER was during the trial of a young midshipman named William W. Pollock, for attempting the life of Mr. Elam R. Jewett, one of the publishers of the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*. The cause was tried in Buffalo, at the September term of the Circuit Court, before Hon. R. P. Marvin. It naturally excited deep

interest throughout the city, and the court-room was thronged during its continuance. In the *Buffalo Republic*, I find the following sketch :

“ After considerable difficulty attendant upon getting a jury, one at last was obtained. When they were sworn, District Attorney BARKER, in a style peculiar to himself, and with his accustomed eloquence, opened the case to the jury.

“ He said the case was one of much interest and importance. This description of offense was one of the worst against the peace and security of society. The prisoner at the bar was charged with attempting the life of Mr. E. R. Jewett, one of the publishers of the *Commercial Advertiser*. The prisoner had occupied a responsible station in community. He had no personal feeling to gratify, or malice against the prisoner, but was actuated only by a desire to discharge to the best of his ability and with fearlessness his duty as prosecuting attorney. Hon. Millard Fillmore, made an eloquent address in behalf of the prisoner, after which Mr. BARKER followed for the people. He did not doubt that Mr. Fillmore felt as he ought (for he was the counsel of the prisoner) the importance of the verdict of the jury to him. He had feelings of sympathy with his fellow-citizens. His was an unpleasant duty to discharge; but believing, as he did, that there had not occurred in the County of Erie a case the effect of an acquittal in which would be fraught with more serious consequences to the well-being of society, he should discharge his duty fearlessly and fully. What, gentlemen of the jury, are the facts of this case? why, this Wm. W. Pollock, the prisoner at the bar, has resided a year or more in our city; from some feelings of resentment at the publication of an article reflecting, as he thought, too harshly on his character, came into the counting-room of Mr. Jewett, and after asking him a few questions regarding the responsibility of the article in question, fired a pistol at him which he drew from beneath his cloak, and but for the providential interference of a pocket-book and its contents, which

stood between him and his intended victim, would have taken his life. This was performed in broad daylight. It was a deed that would have been more appropriate if committed at the South, where such offenses are winked at by juries; but it wanted the Southern chivalry of the thing. It was as cowardly as unprovoked. Suppose the prisoner at the bar had been an unbefriended and unknown personage, would we have seen this array of distinguished counsel; this tremendous effort made to clear him? No, had it been such a case, the prisoner would have been convicted and sentenced in a single day. The charge had been too often made, that persons who had wealthy and influential friends had frequently escaped with impunity, while the friendless and destitute, even if they were innocent, found a ready conviction.

“He trusted that in this case, guilt would not be permitted to shield itself behind talent, however exalted it might be. See what a respectable physician testifies: ‘If the shot had taken effect in the artery, near which it hit, death would have been the result.’ Is he not responsible for the consequences of the act? Did he not know what would result from the firing of the pistol at Mr. Jewett’s body? According to Mr. Fillmore’s argument, a man must understand the laws of anatomy perfectly, before he can be convicted of a crime like the one the prisoner was charged with; he must attend four or five courses of medical lectures. It was owing to no act or merit of the prisoner, that he was not tried for murder, his intention was good enough. Did he not select the weapon which is regarded among all nations as the most deadly—the most murderous for such an object? Was not the prisoner in a hurry to kill his victim, for fear of interruption from those in the store at the time? After he tried to shoot Mr. Jewett, did he not attempt to escape? Did this show guilt or innocence? Was he not acquainted with the instrument he fired? What was his intention in firing? That is for you to determine, gentlemen of the jury. The prisoner felt injured

from a certain article which appeared in Mr. Jewett's paper. Acting on that feeling he sought him in his counting-room, weapon in hand, and attempted his life. The verdict they were to render in this case would exercise a great influence on public opinion. The character adduced for Mr. Pollock by the high-minded and gentlemanly officers of the steamer Michigan was of an irrelevant nature. He asked the jury how they could go beyond the evidence, and admit in extenuation the previous good character of the prisoner."

It is but justice to Mr. Pollock, that I should state that though he was convicted and sentenced to the state prison at Auburn, he was, after a short time, pardoned by Governor Young. The principal reason for so doing was the good character of Mr. Pollock previous to committing the deed for which he was tried and convicted.

I come now to speak of the Syracuse Democratic State Convention of 1847. It was, without doubt, one of the most important political bodies ever convened in the Union. It was an extraordinary assemblage, whether the character of the men who composed it, or the momentous consequences which resulted from its deliberations are considered. Mr. BARKER was appointed by a county convention of the democracy as one of the four delegates to represent Erie County. His associates were Messrs. H. B. Ransom, Stephen Holmes and Isaac Potter. It is perhaps proper to mention that the seats of Mr. BARKER and Mr. Potter were contested, but after submitting the facts to a committee of opposite views they were admitted as the regular members. The part Mr. BARKER took in the proceedings of the convention was the last occasion in which he acted as a representative of his political friends. His health was precarious, but he yielded to their urgent solicitations and accepted the appointment. The subject of the convention had attracted much attention throughout the state. The great democratic party of the state was divided. That party that for years had maintained

the ascendancy in the state, and had contributed liberally to swell the national triumphs of the democracy, was rent in twain by dissensions. Democratic presses were arrayed against each other, and discussed the relative claims of the candidates with less courtesy and fairness than in speaking of their opponents. The convention assembled on the morning of the twenty-ninth of September, 1847. Rarely has such a body convened in this Union. Although it was called simply to nominate state officers, it attracted as large a concourse as if its objects were national. The capacious hall of the Empire House presented a scene worthy of a more graphic and brilliant description than I can give. Some of the most distinguished politicians of the two sections of the democracy of the state were there; those chieftains who had so often led the democratic hosts to battle and victory were there; those veterans who had fought long and gallantly for Jackson and Van Buren were there. On the side of the friends of Mr. Flagg were many politicians distinguished for their eloquence, their skill in debate, knowledge of parliamentary customs, sarcasm and wit. Prominent among them was John Van Buren. This gentleman has attained so high a reputation as an orator, as to render any eulogy from me a work of supererogation. Suffice it to say that he displayed during the four days sitting of the convention, that elegance and force as a speaker, that brilliant and unrivaled sarcasm and humor, that pungency and aptness of illustration which so pre-eminently distinguished him. Preston King, on the same side, added greatly to the strength of his friends by his fine powers as a debater and skill as a manager. Churchill C. Cambreleng, Martin Grover, George Rathbun, James S. Wadsworth, David Dudley Field, William C. Crain, James C. Smith and James R. Doolittle, are each worthy of a notice, but my limits forbid.

That section of the party who were not in favor of Mr. Flagg's nomination nor of the distinctive principles of his

friends, was well represented on this occasion. There was the eloquent James T. Brady and Robert H. Morris, of New York. There, too, were those adroit managers, Rufus W. Peckham, Horatio Seymour, John Stryker, Squier Utley, John Cramer and Ausburn Birdsall. There were other members who concurred with these last-named gentlemen politically, deserving of notice, but I cannot do so, for reasons before stated. The Press was also well represented. Edwin Crosswell, of the *Argus*, the ablest political editor in America, and that accomplished writer, Cassidy, of the *Atlas*, were there. The *Tribune* and *Herald*, and other papers of influence, had reporters on the spot. The hall was crowded with spectators, and great interest was constantly felt in the proceedings. Much of the time of the convention was occupied with discussions on the disputed seats. The debates were of a nature well calculated to elicit eloquence, sarcasm, wit and retort. But I cannot dwell upon them. The general results of the convention are well known and their repetition is unnecessary. Mr. BARKER'S course during the two days he was present was in strict accordance with the wishes of those he represented. Although firm and decided, he was at the same time courteous and kind to his opponents. On one or two occasions he briefly addressed the convention, but his health was such as to prevent his acquitting himself with his accustomed ability. The convention continued its sitting until two o'clock on Sunday morning, October 3d, but Mr. BARKER was compelled by business engagements to return on the 1st. He left as his substitute Mr. Oliver Patch, a gentleman who possesses considerable tact as a politician and remarkable energy.

The last political speech Mr. BARKER made was on the evening of October 20, 1847. A meeting of his political friends in Buffalo was called for the purpose of considering the action of the Syracuse convention, and to appoint a delegate to attend the mass meeting to be held at Herkimer. The court-house was crowded to its utmost capacity, and after having been

enthusiastically called for, he rose and for nearly two hours enchained the audience by the vigor of his appeals and the splendor of his diction. The fire of his youth seemed renewed. He reviewed with masterly ability the proceedings of the convention, and pointed out with great clearness and force the proper course to be pursued under the circumstances. He pronounced himself entirely and strongly in favor of confining slavery to its present limits. In short, he declared himself unequivocally in favor of the principles advocated by the section of the party to which he was attached. The speech he made on the occasion to which I refer will long be remembered by those who had the good fortune to hear it, as one of his very finest efforts. It was, as I said before, his last political speech!

CHAPTER IX.

Alarming State of his Health—His Death—Proceedings in the Recorder's Court—Meeting of the Bar—His Funeral—His General Characteristics—Eulogies—Funeral Sermon of John C. Lord, D. D.

IT now became painfully evident to Mr. BARKER'S friends that his health was rapidly declining. A crisis was in fact approaching. His fine countenance had become sadly changed by disease. The glow had left his cheek. The luster had faded from his eye, and the smile which was wont to play upon his lips had departed. His whole appearance presented a marked contrast with the brief period of his convalescence. These unfavorable symptoms were witnessed with alarm. He was forced to relinquish further attendance on courts about the middle of November, 1847. The last cause he argued was in the Supreme Court at Buffalo. In consequence of the election of Mr. Sill to the Supreme Court bench, the partnership which had existed between Messrs. Barker and Sill was dissolved in July, 1847, and Mr. Sill left the practice. From that period until his death Mr. BARKER was associated with George Coit, Jr., Esq., in the practice of the law. Among others who kindly volunteered to assist Mr. BARKER in discharging the duties of district attorney, during the precarious state of his health, was Benjamin H. Austin, Esq. This gentleman was elected by the people to the office he now holds, in the spring of 1847, at the first judicial election under the new constitution. Shortly after his withdrawal from court, Mr. BARKER was confined to his house, and a nervous, lingering fever set in. The utmost solicitude was felt throughout the state as to the prospects of his ultimate restoration to health, and attentive friends made repeated and anxious inquiries concerning his

progress. They were alternately elated by favorable and depressed by unfavorable accounts. The city papers once announced, by authority, his probable speedy recovery. In a few days they contained the melancholy announcement of his death! Notwithstanding the best medical skill, and the most kind and assiduous attention, he constantly failed, until death relieved his sufferings, on Thursday, the twenty-seventh of January, 1848, at quarter before 11 A. M., in the 41st year of his age. He exhibited resignation during his entire sickness, and in the terminating scenes of his earthly career displayed great fortitude.

Deep sympathy was manifested everywhere as the intelligence of his demise was communicated. The feeling of regret was universal. It was not confined to formal notices from courts, nor to eulogies from his professional brethren, who conceived an ornament to their profession had fallen; but the merchant in his counting-house, the mechanic in his shop, the laborer leaning over his hod, and the sons of agriculture, heard the annunciation with unfeigned sorrow. The press teemed with feeling eulogies, and on every side were observed manifestations of regret.

The Recorder's Court, Hon. Joseph G. Masten, presiding, was in session at the time of his death, and upon its assembling in the afternoon, Solomon G. Haven, Esq., announced the melancholy event in the following appropriate and feeling manner:

"May it please the Court: I rise to make a motion—one that a short time ago no member of this bar could foresee it would be his duty to make. Our friend—the friend of the whole bar—Gen. BARKER is dead. It pleased an All-wise Providence to take him hence, and he died this morning at fifteen minutes past eleven o'clock, at his residence on Eagle street, in this city. He was not only the leading counselor of this court, but a leading counselor of this state, and one who, in the true spirit of a lawyer, devoted his life to the profession.

"He was a man of learning, of genius, of eloquence, of honesty, of unsullied honor, and of great and varied ability. His heart was with his fellow-men, and his sympathies with the oppressed.

"His death in the prime of his years will not only be mourned by his family and connections, and by us his neighbors and friends, but will be felt throughout the whole state and chronicled throughout the Union.

"How often have all who hear me sat in this place and been charmed by his eloquence and admired his ability? Nothing but kindness and courtesy ever marked his intercourse with us. And I am sure nothing but the deepest sorrow is felt by us all on account of this infliction.

"I cannot now, with the reflection of this event upon me, pronounce his eulogy; the event itself speaks home to all of us who knew him. I can only announce his death, and move as I do—on account of the profound respect we all feel for his memory and the emotions we all possess from the recollections of this great loss—that this court do now adjourn."

A meeting of the members of the bar was held immediately after the adjournment of the court, and Hon. J. G. Masten was called to the chair and C. H. S. Williams, Esq., appointed secretary.

On motion of Dyre Tillinghast, Esq., a committee of seven was appointed to draft resolutions expressive of their deep regret at the mournful death of Mr. BARKER and for making arrangements for the taking of proper action with reference to attending his funeral.

The following gentlemen were named as the committee: Dyre Tillinghast, H. J. Stow, S. E. Sill, George R. Babcock, J. G. Masten, Eli Cook.

The adjourned meeting of the bar was held in the evening. Hon. J. G. Masten was called to the chair and O. H. Marshall, Esq., appointed secretary. The committee appointed at the previous meeting to consider what action it was necessary to

take upon the death of their late associate, reported through their chairman the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted :

"Whereas, It hath pleased an All-wise Providence in the dispensation of His power, to strike down in our midst by the hand of death, in the very prime of life, our late brother, GEORGE P. BARKER—a brother whose high-minded and honorable bearing made him an exemplar worthy of all imitation ; whose varied learning and sterling integrity placed him in various public trusts at home, and finally advanced him, at an early age, to the elevated and honorable position of attorney-general, in which he commanded universal confidence and esteem, and discharged its duties with equal honor to himself and the state ; one in whom there was no guile ; whose whole soul was devoted to the amelioration of the condition of his fellow-men ; the exertion of whose giant intellect imparted instruction to all, and whose eloquence, whether in the social circle or the arena of forensic debate, was alike charming ; therefore,

"Resolved, That we have heard the announcement of the death of our departed brother, with the most poignant grief and sorrow. In his death, his family have suffered a bereavement irreparable ; the social circle has been deprived of a most interesting member ; the legal profession has lost one of its brightest ornaments, and the free institutions of our country a most faithful and powerful champion.

"Resolved, That we tender to his mourning family the condolence of our heartfelt sympathies in their most afflicting bereavement.

"Resolved, That we will, as a testimonial of our regard for the memory of the deceased, attend his funeral in a body from his late residence on Monday next, and that we will wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days.

"Resolved, That a copy of the proceedings of this meeting

be presented to the Recorder's Court of the City of Buffalo, at its present session and to the Supreme Court, in Erie County, with a request that they may be entered upon their respective records.

"Resolved, That a copy of these proceedings be presented to the family of the deceased.

"Resolved, That a committee of thirteen and the chairman of this meeting, be appointed to make and execute such arrangements as may be deemed appropriate for the occasion."

The following persons were announced to compose the committee under the last resolution : Dyre Tillinghast, Hon. S. E. Sill, Hon. J. G. Masten, Hon. F. P. Stevens, Hon. H. J. Stow, Hon. H. K. Smith, B. H. Austin, G. R. Babcock, S. Caldwell, T. T. Sherwood, E. Ford, S. G. Austin, S. G. Haven, H. B. Potter.

His funeral took place on the Monday succeeding his death. In accordance with the wishes of Mr. BARKER, all unnecessary display was avoided. His remains were taken at two o'clock in the afternoon, from his late residence on West Eagle street, under the direction of a committee of the bar, to the North Presbyterian Church. The streets through which the procession passed were thronged with sympathizing spectators. The spacious church itself was crowded almost to suffocation, and numbers were unable to obtain admittance. Intense grief was depicted on each countenance in the vast audience. Each individual seemed to have lost a near and dear friend. There were those present who had known and loved him for years. The oldest and most substantial, the middle-aged and the youth of our citizens were well represented. John C. Lord, D. D., was very appropriately selected to pronounce the funeral discourse. He had been the associate and intimate friend of Mr. BARKER in early life, and though separated in after-life, by their different professions, still entertained for him warm feelings of friendship and regard. In compliance with a very

general request, I have obtained the reverend gentleman's permission to publish his discourse entire. It adds fresh laurels to the reputation of its distinguished author, and is a feeling and beautiful tribute to the memory of his departed friend.

Mr. BARKER's remains, upon the conclusion of the exercises, were followed by a large number of mourners in carriages and on foot, to the burial-ground in the upper part of the city a little east of Main street, where they were deposited.

The appearance of Mr. BARKER was very dignified and graceful; his person, over six feet in height, was well developed and muscular without being robust; his eyes were of a deep gray color; his features, regular in their outline and faultless in proportion, suggested a similarity to classic models.

He was an affectionate husband and kind father. In the selection of a partner for life he was peculiarly fortunate. Mrs. Barker, by her devotion to her husband, her elegant manners and domestic virtues, gained the esteem and secured the regard of all who knew her. Her irreparable loss in the death of her husband was universally commiserated. Their union was blessed with two promising children, a son and daughter. The former is now about thirteen and the latter seven years of age.

As a citizen, Mr. BARKER was greatly beloved. His kind and polished manners; his unbounded generosity; his disinterestedness and magnanimity made him a general favorite. His integrity was unquestioned; his honor unsullied. Avarice found no place in his bosom. He estimated his compeers in life not by their social position or worldly possessions, but by those qualities which ennoble man. He performed good actions not for the ephemeral applause they secured, but from the love of them. He knew the luxury of doing good. He was frank and courageous. He neither sought concealment or shrunk from consequences. His views on all subjects, affecting the interests of the city, were enlarged and liberal,

and in all public stations he ever consulted the general good in preference to his own aggrandizement.

His intellect was superior to any office he ever filled. His judgment was acute; his energy and industry uncommon; his acquirements varied and extensive, and his oratorical powers seldom equalled. The music of his voice; the animated expression of his fine features; his wonderful command of language; his gorgeous imagery and his prepossessing and dignified mein, will be retained in the memories of thousands. He was not devoid of ambition. But it was not of a selfish kind. He did not justify the maxim that "the end justifies the means." In all public stations he sustained himself with distinguished honor.

Did my limits admit, I could fill a volume with eulogies that have been pronounced upon his social and intellectual qualities.

William Cullen Bryant, the poet of America, in the following lines, briefly but elegantly alludes to his deceased friend and political associate: "General BARKER was a man of fine talents and agreeable social qualities; his career as a public man was highly honorable, alike to his abilities, his integrity and his courage."

In a late number of the *Albany Argus*, its gifted editor says: "A biography of General BARKER will be read with interest by his numerous friends, and will be a deserved tribute to the character and public services of one of the most gifted men of our state. If there were party or personal feeling at any time, these have passed away, and those who knew the deceased only remembered the noble and brilliant qualities for which he was distinguished."

Mr. Hammond, in his able "political history," thus feelingly speaks: "Mr. BARKER'S 'impulses' were always of the most kind and generous character. His heart overflowed with benevolence to all men, and he was beloved by all. Alas! he has now gone to the grave. We do not believe the man

is now living who will acknowledge himself to have been personally unfriendly to GEORGE P. BARKER."

No monument yet points to the visitor where all that was mortal of Mr. BARKER reposes. This omission should be supplied. The marble column should be raised over his ashes, as a monument of his public efforts and genius. His memory will be cherished without, and his good deeds will be perpetuated, but its erection will reflect credit on the "Queen City of the Lakes," and be an act of justice to the memory of a distinguished citizen.

I here give in full, from the original manuscript, the funeral discourse, delivered on the occasion of the death of General GEORGE P. BARKER, at the North Presbyterian Church, on the thirty-first day of January, 1848, by John C. Lord, D. D.:

S E R M O N.

"My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand and I brake the jaws of the wicked and plucked the spoil out of his teeth; unto me men gave ear and waited and kept silence at my counsel, and they waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain; I chose out their way and sat chief and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners, and now my soul is poured out upon me, the days of affliction have taken hold upon me."—Job xxix: 20, 17, 21, 23, 25; xxx: 16.

These words were uttered more than four thousand years since by the Patriarch Job in the ancient Arabia. The lapse of forty centuries has not varied the conditions of human life, or changed the character of the family of man, or materially mitigated the calamities and sorrows which are our perpetual inheritance in the pilgrimage of time. Across the chasm of one hundred and twenty generations there come to us the prolonged echoes of the lamentations of the primitive races—of the brevity of life—the mutability of fortune—of the vanity of temporal hopes and earthly distinctions. The lessons we learn in bereavements like the one which has assembled us to-day, have been taught from the beginning, have been mournfully echoed from one age to another, and the sum of the teaching and testimony of all experience is comprehended in the brief but expressive words of inspiration "verily man at his best estate is altogether vanity." The record of the greatest of monarchs and the wisest of men who knew the sum of all that can be conferred by wisdom, wealth or power, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" has never been impeached by his successors or contradicted by subsequent experiences in the paths of glory and greatness. Poets, orators and historians, have ever drawn the same picture of human life,

of its uncertainty, its vicissitudes, its sorrows, its brevity. From the beginning, from the time of the apostacy, from the day on which the flaming sword of the Cherubim flashed across the gates of Eden, guarding the avenue to the tree of life and barring forever all re-entrance to the terrestrial paradise, life and death have been in perpetual antagonism, ever in proximity, ever warring, and in this confused struggle in which death is always at the last victor, men have ever been warned of their false confidences and directed to higher hopes, to nobler aspirations, to another and better life.

What sum of human history is in these words—Life and Death! what images and contrasts are suggested by them. Life is a crowded city—Death a solitary desert; Life is a glorious landscape of river and forest, of mountain and valley wherein appear active forms innumerable, full of the “joyous sense of being”—Death is the dead sea in which no living thing moves, over which no bird of the air flies and around which are barren rocks, relieved by no verdure and upon which descendeth neither rain nor dew. Whatever is dark, desolate or dreary we connect with death, whatever is bright, active, and joyous with life. Pestilence, famine and the sword are the emblems of the one, health, plenty and peace are the symbols of the other. With the idea of death we join deformity, decay and dissolution, with that of life, beauty, vigor and happiness. So natural and permanent are these impressions in the mind of man, that God has made them the signs and shadows of the diverse conditions in the life to come. Life is the symbol of the heavenly state; to enter upon life, in the phraseology of Scripture, is to come to the heavenly city, to enter its gates of pearl; to walk its golden streets; to repose by its rivers of blessedness; to unite with the redeemed throng in that eternal anthem of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, around the throne of God, which fills the arches of heaven with ravishing melody. On the other hand, death is the symbol of the perdition of ungodly men; the image of

the horrors of hell ; the emblem of that condition of separation and banishment where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched ; where over the children of lust and pride despair and darkness reign with an unchangeable dominion. In our present state of being the conditions of another life and of a world to come can only be communicated under sensible images ; the soul, while a tenant of its earthly tabernacle, must behold, "as in a glass darkly," eternal realities through temporal and material resemblances ; so ever in the Scriptures the seen and finite is made the example and shadow of the unseen and unchangeable. In the visible heavens the glory of the invisible is shadowed forth ; in the darkness and corruption of the grave is the symbol of the place of final doom ; in natural life is found the type of that which is eternal ; in natural death the emblem of that which is spiritual and unending.

To secure the life that now is, what sacrifices are made, what perils endured, what efforts undertaken ; what proclamations of remedies from a thousand sources and from every quarter for the diseases which are the ministers of the King of Terrors, while, at the farthest, life can be prolonged but for a brief season and Death comes at last with his ghastly retinue, and *suddenly* not less than *certainly* ; for while to the varied forms of animal and vegetable life there is usually a season and a day, yet man knoweth not the number of his appointed months nor the bounds that he cannot pass ; the Son of man cometh in such an hour as we think not—at midnight is heard the startling cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh !"

And though men cannot avoid the evidences of change and death which are above, beneath and around them, which are common to every age and witnessed by every generation, yet they seek to avoid the appropriate impression, they disregard too often the solemn lessons of the Divine providence, they turn away not only from the warnings of death and judgment, but also, alas ! from the invitation of the gospel and the

promise of eternal life through the crucified Redeemer who carried our griefs and upon whom the chastisement of our peace was laid when He trod the "wine-press of God's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with Him." Men do not love to be reminded of their guilt or their mortality; they walk in a vain show, they call their lands after their own names, they devise, and labor, and build as though they were to live here forever; they dream of an indefinite future in time, though standing ever by the gates of eternity; they boast themselves of to-morrow, though always at the grave's mouth; though "hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure" to receive "their glory, their pomp, and their multitude;" they say in their vain confidence, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry," though the messenger of death is at their doors, and the voice of doom is in their ears, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

But there are occasions, and this is one of them, when life and death, the living and the dead, are brought together; when men, under circumstances which enforce their attention, behold as in a glass their own image and are startled to see reflected the lineaments of death; when they are compelled to gaze upon the narrow habitation which must soon be their own, upon the closed eye, the fallen visage and sunken cheek, which are an image of what theirs shall be when God shall change their countenances and send them away. The living and the dead are here together to-day—many living indeed, and but one dead—waiting to go to the dark and narrow house to arise no more until the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God shall fall upon and quicken the dull, cold ear of death. Many living and but one dead, in this vast congregation to-day—how long will it be before of all this assembly there shall be *one* living and many dead? How long before the sole survivor of this multitude shall look back to this occasion and deem it but a brief space, as it were but a day, since he sat in this house and witnessed these solemnities? And what death

that shall hereafter occur will be likely to make a greater impression than that of the distinguished man whose mortal remains are before us in this house of prayer to-day? Whose reputation at forty years of age is likely to be more extensive?—whose popularity more universal?—whose personal friends more numerous and devoted?—whose prospects for the future more bright and glorious? Who in commanding intellect, generous and noble impulses, in captivating eloquence, in native generosity, in unsullied honor, in all those gifts of mind and graces of person which attract admiration and secure affection, is likely to excel him or leave at his death a greater circle of mourners, or afford in the day that makes the “grave his house,” a more striking commentary on the words of the Holy Spirit, “verily man at his best estate is altogether vanity”? When shall we have occasion more appropriately to utter the ancient Hebrew lamentation, “how is the strong staff broken and the beautiful rod?” Are not the words of the text, in which the prosperity and glory of the Arabian Patriarchs are portrayed, strikingly applicable to him whose last journey is to be made to-day from this house to the grave? Whose glory was “fresher” than his? Whose bow was oftener renewed in his hand? Who by his hatred of oppression, no less than by his office as the prosecuting counsel of the state, more frequently “brake the jaws of the wicked and plucked the prey out of his teeth”? To whose eloquence did men give more “attentive ear” or so “wait and kept silence at his words”? Who so followed by a host of friends, who waited for him as for the latter rain? Who “chose out the way of a greater multitude” or sat more like a chief among them, or “as a king in an army”? Whose breast was more easily touched by a story of suffering or wrong, whose hand was more open to the destitute “as one that comforteth the mourners”? What greater prosperity has the shadow of death suddenly darkened? Fortunate, eminent, beloved, he was compelled, in the full tide of success, in the meridian of

life, with more gained and more in prospect than is attained by one in a thousand, even of those reckoned prosperous and fortunate in the competitions of this life, to take up, on a bed of sickness and of great mental and bodily anguish, the lamentation of the text "and now my soul is poured out upon me, the days of affliction have taken hold upon me." What to him were the honors he had won, when the shadows of eternity began to curtain that bed of pain? What availed then the breath of popular applause to him who was about to come into the presence of the King of Kings, to give an account of the deeds done in the body? How faded, in the vision of our dying brother, these earthly and transitory honors which shone upon his brilliant career, when he felt the need of an incorruptible crown and a heavenly inheritance? How cheaply he held the coveted distinction of time when drawing near the confines of the unseen world and the judgment seat of Christ? How worthless were to him the glories of an earthly state, compared with the glory, honor and immortality revealed in the gospel, which is eternal life. How just must have appeared to him that powerfully expressed satire of one of the older poets, as applicable to the conflicts of the forum as of the field:

"Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill,
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still.
Early or late
They meet their fate
And must give up their murmuring breath,
While they, pale captives, creep toward death."

With what profound humility of soul and, we hope, true penitence did our distinguished friend look back upon very many passages in his successful and envied career, now brought to an untimely and unexpected close. As one of his oldest and, in early life, one of his most intimate friends; as one who was a fellow-student with him in the school of that honorable

profession of which he was afterwards a distinguished ornament ; as a friend who, though separated from him for years by the choice of another and humbler walk in life, yet always regarded him with affection, and watched his course and marked with interest his rising fame, I may speak, perhaps more freely than another, what I think he would desire me to say upon this funeral occasion, and of those things which he had occasion to regret when he entered upon the valley of the shadow of death.

From what I have learned from those who constantly watched by the bedside of Gen. BARKER during his protracted sickness, from what I have myself seen and known, I am satisfied that he felt and acknowledged with keen regret the errors, of which his bitterest enemy could not have spoken in terms of greater severity—that the power of religious conviction was strong upon him, that it was his firm resolution, if his life was spared, to obey the gospel. I am persuaded, from all the feelings and views manifested by him during the last months of his life, that he would desire the friend and companion of his youth to say to the congregation here assembled to manifest their respect and affection for him in the last offices for the dead, not to defer and neglect the eternal interests of the soul upon pleas of worldly care, or for any enticement of pleasure, or any promise of distinction and fame. His solemn convictions of the realities of the unseen life and the truth of the gospel require me to admonish you in his name that there are higher interests than those of time, that there are responsibilities to God greater even than these which arise in our relations to our fellow-men, that there are duties which neglected make a death-bed painful, and that one smile of a reconciled God and Saviour is worth, in the hour of sorrow and in the article of death, more than all the applause ever gathered by genius and learning, by eloquence and art, by place and power from all the generations that have passed over the stage of life since the day of the apostacy. We do not intend in this to intimate

that professional distinction, political influence and worldly fame are incompatible with a pious life and a Christian profession. While the names of Chief Justice Marshall and Chancellor Kent stand in the first rank of the legal profession, while they remain the brightest stars in the constellation of American jurists, it can never be said that true religion or fervent piety are inconsistent with the greatest success and with the highest honors. We never have indorsed that common slander against the legal profession which insinuates that high integrity and practical Christianity are incompatible with the successful practice of the law. A profession which has to do with the eternal principles of justice, in their application to the relations and business of life, which has the guardianship of private and public rights, whose office it is to break the jaws of the wicked and pluck the prey out of his teeth; a profession which leads its votaries back to that "*lex suprema*," the law of God, that great first rule of right action "prescribed by a superior power," applicable to all worlds and to all moral agents, can have no mean, contracting or demoralizing tendency. Unworthy men may make a bad use of their legal knowledge, as they may, indeed, of things esteemed most sacred and holy, yet that there should be immoral influences in the practice of the law is contradicted by the very nature of the profession which deals in first truths, which is engaged in the application of the universal principles of justice to cases that arise in the complicated affairs of life and the varied transactions of commerce and trade, which must ever exert upon uncorrupted minds a beneficial influence, both as regards the understanding and the affections. But as men are not always led by nature to nature's God, though "the heavens declare His glory," so those who are engaged in the affairs of law and legislation too often neglect the supreme law uttered from Sinai, and are too often unmindful of that supreme Law-giver and Legislator who is the king eternal and invisible, upon whose ultimate and supreme authority all governments

rest and all judicial decisions find their warrant, without which the one would be a mere usurpation and the other the arbitrary dictums of an unauthorized and irresponsible tribunal.

To his brethren of the bar of this city and county, whose generous and delicate attention to his bereaved family, whose kindness to the living and the dead, will never be forgotten by the widow and the fatherless who have sustained this irreparable loss, we think our deceased friend, from his freely-expressed sentiments during the last months of his life, would desire me, with all respect, to say that the study and practice of your learned and responsible profession should always lead its votaries to the fountain of law, that the second table of the decalogue which prescribes our relative duties, with which every jurist is constantly conversant, should lead you to the first and great commandment which exhibits the claims of God; that while guarding the rights of persons and property, while vindicating the majesty of law and the authority of government, and while enforcing the penalties of crime, you are naturally reminded of the rights of the grand Proprietor and the Supreme Government, and of the penal sanctions of the first and fundamental statute, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," the universal law which, like that of gravitation in the natural world, extends throughout the entire moral universe, the golden chain that binds in one brotherhood all holy and happy intelligences, disobedience to which is the mark of separation, and, continued, becomes at last the evidence of judgment and perdition. I think I speak but his last thoughts, whose earthly tabernacle we are about to consign to the clods of the valleys, when I suggest that those who are engaged in the business of human tribunals, who stand at the judgment seats of earthly courts, who plead at the bar of fallible judges, advocating the cause of the accused or seeking to procure their condemnation, that they who "break the jaws of the wicked," above all other men are led by their office and profession to consider the grand assize, the final tribunal, with

its irrevocable judgments, seen in vision by the last of the apostles, "and I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them ; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." You are continually reminded by the business of your profession of the supreme and infallible Judge from whose decisions there are no appeals, against whose judgment lies no writ of error, no motion for reversal. You are constantly reminded by the varied responsibilities recognized by human laws that "every one of us must give an account of himself unto God, that every man at the bar of the final judgment must answer for himself, where but one Advocate is admitted to appear, where but one plea can avail ; above all, you are reminded of that final sentence, that eternal judgment which separates forever the just from the unjust, the righteous from the wicked, which pronounces in tones which penetrate all hearts and fill all space, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

To many of you these thoughts are familiar, to all they should be so, for we stand ever by the borders of the unseen world, where no steps can be retraced, no acts of pardon or remission passed, no judgment disannulled, no intercession prevail. To retain the all-prevalent and only Advocate at the court of heaven, to obtain the grace and justification which, as sinners, we all need, to secure the patent of pardon under the broad seal of the Supreme Magistrate, and written in the blood of the Eternal Son upon whom was laid our iniquities, should be the immediate endeavor of every hearer in this house to-day. Do we not here behold the evidence that our life is a vapor ? Is there not a voice to us to-day from heaven ; a voice from the four winds, a voice from this coffin, "boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day shall

bring forth"? For that final assize where all the transactions of time shall be reviewed, when all human judgments shall be re-examined, when every hidden thing shall be revealed and the secrets of all hearts exposed, for that day of final and fiery trial, which "shall try every man's work of what sort it is,"

"When shriveling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll,"

it becomes us all to be prepared, for there is no work, or wisdom, or device, or knowledge in the grave to which we hasten. When the bow of the mighty is sundered, when the strong staff is broken, when the rod of beauty is withered, when he whose glory was fresh, who sat chief and dwelt as a king in the army, is cut off in the way, when *his* light is darkened whose sun was yet in its meridian, when the strong man bows himself, should we not open our ears to the solemn teachings of such a providence, and hear a voice from such a death proclaiming "life is short, eternity is long"?

GEORGE PAYSON BARKER was born on the twenty-fifth day of October, 1807, in Rindge, New Hampshire. He was descended from that old Puritan stock who bent the knee to none but God; who, failing for the time in England in their contest with the tyrannies in the state and in the church, fled to the new world where they founded a free government and worshiped the Highest after the dictates of their consciences, with none to molest them or make them afraid. In his mother's line are found some of the most distinguished men in New England; he was nearly related to that celebrated clergyman, Dr. Payson, of Maine, whose praise is in all the churches. He was prepared for college in his native state, under the private tuition of a clergyman, which thirty years since was a common practice in the northern states, and he always considered this the most thorough part of his education and superior to his subsequent academical training. A portion of his collegiate life was spent at Amherst, Mass., the remainder

at Union College, in this state, where he graduated in the year 1827. The same year he commenced the study of law in this city. In 1829 he was chosen clerk of the then Village of Buffalo. In December, 1832, he was appointed to the responsible office of District Attorney of the County of Erie. At the general election in 1835, he was sent to the assembly of this state, an election which was the result of his great personal popularity, as the political party to which he was attached were at that time in a minority in this city and county. In 1842 he was appointed by the legislature to the honorable and highly responsible office of attorney-general of this state, and there is no higher evidence of the great ability of our deceased friend than the manner in which he sustained himself in this prominent and difficult position. A young man, called from the western and comparatively obscure and neglected portion of this great commonwealth, to take the official place of *chief* among the old lawyers at the capital who were giants in their profession, in a state whose Bar and Judiciary are confessedly unrivalled on this continent, General BARKER so discharged the duties of his office, and so won the esteem and affection of the bar, the legislature, and the people, that his re-election at the close of his term was only prevented by his positive declination.

General BARKER was distinguished by a commanding person and a most winning and courteous manner; in personal popularity he was, perhaps, without a rival in this part of the state. He was characterized by a generous disposition, which shone out in his countenance and appeared without affectation in his whole deportment. He had a hand and a heart open as day to melting charity, and while he knew how to repel those who presumed upon his characteristic courtesy, there were none so poor or so lowly as to be denied his attention or refused his sympathy. He was a ready and eloquent speaker, who felt, and made others feel, what he said; he had the instant command of his resources, yet was none the less a well-read

lawyer, and an able and judicious counselor. There are those who connect with fluency, readiness and eloquence, the idea of a want of research and depth; these notions of profundity and wisdom are like those which led the ancients to embody their ideas of sagacity and reflection in the symbol of an owl, the chosen bird of Minerva in the pagan mythology, which was after all, perhaps, intended as a quiet sarcasm upon that popular fallacy which in every age has made silence and stolidity the marks of profound thought, rather than of the stupidity in which they ordinarily originate.

The companion and associate of the deceased in his earlier studies in his profession, I can speak confidently of the fact that he read his profession with diligence, and though of a gay and convivial temperament, and led too often into associations where his time was worse than wasted, yet he endeavored to make up for this by hours taken from those commonly devoted to sleep. He was sensible of the excesses into which he was occasionally led, and never thought of justifying them, for he belonged to that noble order of men who are capable of the magnanimity of receiving a reproof and acknowledging an error. He had a nice sense of honor, and was abhorrent of all that was mean and servile, cunning and contracted. He had an ardent temperament, and his judgments of men were sometimes hasty and prejudiced, yet he was ever ready to defend those unjustly defamed. With what lofty indignation and eloquent invective has he treated the aspersions cast upon some of his friends by men who, because they have never known any higher motives of action than ambition and selfishness, suppose that no purer or holier incentives can be felt by others.

These characteristics were manifest in his discharge of the duties of the office of prosecuting attorney for the people, in which he spent a large portion of his professional life. While vigilant in the prosecution of offenses, he was not disposed to urge convictions in doubtful cases, as many do under the

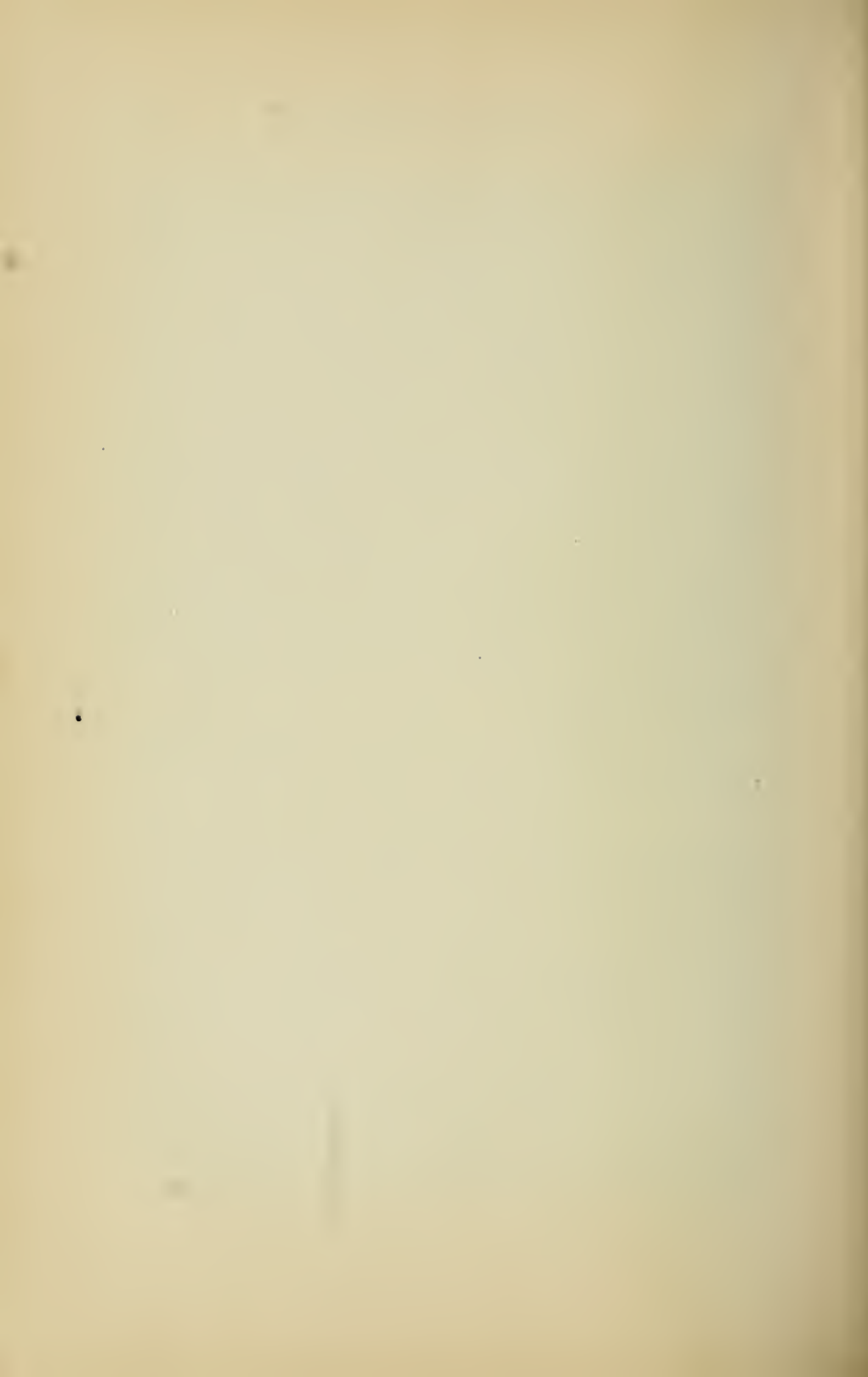
mere influence of professional pride. He would not easily have pardoned himself the procuring of the conviction of an accused person of whose guilt he had any reasonable doubts. It was perhaps a fault of General BARKER that he never accumulated property, with all the facilities he enjoyed, but so rare is this fault in men in his circumstances, and with his opportunities, that it becomes almost a virtue and will be easily pardoned by those who remember his characteristic generosity. Casuists may dispute whether profusion or covetousness be the greater sin, but there can be no question as to that which is the most common and the most unamiable.

But we can dwell no longer on the characteristics of our departed brother; he has gone to the tribunal of a just Judge, and is henceforth beyond the applause or censure of men. We shall see him no more 'till the heavens fail; his voice is silent in death; his beauty shall fade in the grave; he has "said to corruption, thou art my father, to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister." "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished," "the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle of life!" "I am distressed for thee, my brother, very pleasant hast thou been unto me, but now the grave is thine house; thy dwelling-place is with the dead, thy soul has returned to God who gave it!"

It will be expected, perhaps, that something more should be said of the last sickness of our departed friend, and of his views and feelings when the shadow of the angel of death darkened his dwelling. In fulfilling this expectation, I intend to be faithful to the living as well as the dead. In the pathetic language of the text, "his soul was poured out upon him, the days of affliction took hold upon him." Most deeply did he feel the importance of the great questions which relate to the soul and the way of salvation; most heartily did he condemn himself for all his past neglects of divine things in the knowledge of which he had been instructed by his pious mother. Most humbly did he confess himself to God for his

sins of omission and commission, saying, "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight." His prayer in his last sickness was ever that of the publican at the temple, "God be merciful to me a sinner." For more than a year before his death, I am informed by his afflicted widow, he was constant in his daily perusal of the sacred Scriptures. His judgments upon himself in his last sickness were most severe, and though he expressed no clear hope of the mercy of God in Christ for which he sought with "strong crying and tears," yet we are not without hope that He who hath said, "to him that knocketh it shall be opened, and whoso judgeth himself shall not be judged," before whom were the prayers of his pious ancestry, and their tears "preserved in His bottle," who remembereth the covenant "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee," heard and accepted the petition of our dying brother, though He did not vouchsafe those hopes and joys which might have led others to cast their souls upon the doubtful hazard of a death-bed repentance.

There was nothing in the case of our departed friend to justify or encourage any man in neglecting the affairs of the soul until the days of affliction, darkness and death. Yet we do not sorrow for him as those without hope; we commit him to the judgment of that great Judge who will do all things well, whose mercies are as high as heaven, as fathomless as the depths of the sea, and who is able to save to the uttermost; to whom also let us commend our own souls, for we shall soon follow the distinguished man whose remains we are about to consign to the earth; for us the silver cord of life will soon be loosed, and every one of us must soon give an account of himself unto God, and it is our prayer to the Father of Mercies that every hearer in this house may find the gate of life, may choose the better portion, may retain that Almighty Advocate who can alone plead prevailingly, and have that Judge for his friend, whose decisions are irrevocable and without appeal.



BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN C. LORD, D. D.

Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church for thirty-eight years.

JOHN CHASE LORD! As I pen the name of my friend of the olden time, memory brings to mind his commanding, dignified, attractive form, his strikingly intellectual countenance, his look of manly determination, his hearty salutation, his characteristics as a gentleman of the old school. He was then full of the vigor and fire of early manhood, and his pulpit efforts were to my then more youthful imagination as brilliant, as varied and as sparkling as the colors of the rainbow! Visions revert to my mind of the old Pearl-street Church, a beautiful edifice (erected in 1836), without galleries, its audience-room of oval form, the pulpit at the street end and the orchestra at the rear; the blare of the trumpet and the harp, and the sackbut and the viol, seemed to realize the old temple service. I had never before heard any instrument in worship of more cunning workmanship than the wooden pitch-pipe and the steel tuning-fork, which were accustomed to launch delicious melodies upon the air of primitive village churches. In fact that orchestral magnificence still haunts my imagination. The pulpit was a low, plain platform, with a small desk in the center, and inscribed on the oval wall over it were these Scriptural quotations: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil." "The Lamb is the light thereof."

Never shall I forget the peculiar form of the church. The exterior of the building was an exact copy of the Parthenon at Athens; the dome, from which the room was lighted, was thirty-three feet by twenty-one, and constructed of richly-stained glass, from which floods of mellow light streamed through with fine effect; in the center of this dome hung a magnificent chandelier; the acoustic properties of the building were complete. In this unique edifice, forty-four years ago, I first heard Dr. LORD; first listened to his wonderful erudition, his unequalled logic, his impassioned utterances, his mighty force. Here I first heard the eminent divine whose subsequent efforts placed him in the front rank of American pulpit orators. He made the church edifices of which he was pastor, by his labors and his sacrifices, by his intellect and the power of his genius, monumental.

The limits of this tribute to our townsman will be insufficient to do ample justice to his distinguished career. If I succeed in placing in a permanent form the more prominent features of his character and life-work my object will have been attained. It was not merely as a clergyman that Dr. LORD was entitled to a conspicuous place in the records of our city, for he was for many years a large part of its intellectual, moral and political history. During the middle period of his life there was not a question in Church or State, of general public interest, in which he was not a leader of opinion on one side or the other.

Dr. LORD was born in Washington, New Hampshire, on the ninth of August, 1805, and was the son of Rev. John Lord and Sarah Chase, who was the cousin of the late Chief Justice Chase. At the age of twelve years he entered Plainfield Academy, in his native state. Subsequently he entered Madison Academy. Afterwards, for two years, he was in Hamilton

College, in New York. He graduated in the same class with our distinguished fellow-townsmen, Judge George W. Clinton and Dr. Thomas M. Foote. After two years editorial experience in Canada, as the editor-in-chief of "*The Canadian*," he came to Buffalo in 1825, entering the office of Messrs. Love & Tracy, then the leading law firm in Western New York. He taught a select school for two months, having Orsamus H. Marshall, Esq., and Dr. James P. White as pupils. He was admitted to the bar in 1828. In the latter part of that year, on December 9th, at four o'clock P. M., at the parsonage, by the Rev. E. B. Smith, he was married to Miss Mary Elizabeth Johnson, daughter of the late Dr. Ebenezer Johnson, the first mayor of Buffalo and one of its leading citizens. That marriage had its specially romantic incident, which survives, a pleasant tradition of its time. It was a most happy one, and no couple were ever more devoted to each other.

To the legal profession Dr. LORD brought health, ambition, forecast, pluck, yet, in the midst of his early triumphs, he heard the voice which arrested Paul on that journey to Damascus, and obeyed it. He turned his back on the allurements of a worldly ambition for the labors and sacrifices of the ministerial office. In this act were revealed the ardor of his nature, the depth of his convictions and the fountain-springs of his character.

After uniting with the First Presbyterian Church of this city he entered the Auburn Theological Seminary in 1830, from which he graduated in 1833. Soon afterwards he was called to Geneseo, Livingston Co., N. Y., and for two years was pastor of the Presbyterian church in that village. At Geneseo his sermons were less thoughtful, but not less earnest, than after his removal to Buffalo, where he felt the spur and answered to it. He stood firmly on the creed which Milton

has clothed with immortal words in "Paradise Lost"; which Augustine, and Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, and Bunyan, and Whitefield, and Robert Hall preached with a power before which selfishness and sin slunk away abashed. He was intensely orthodox, according to the Genevan standards. Dr. LORD loved the old better than the new. All his life long he loved to seek the old paths and walk in them. A favorite text of his was: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—Jer. vi: 16.

Meanwhile the progress of events in Buffalo was causing the way to be opened for the return of Dr. LORD to the city where he had only been known as a lawyer and a teacher. In 1835 the First Presbyterian Church had sent out a colony. The Presbytery of Buffalo organized these thirty-three members into a society, with the name of the "Pearl-street Presbyterian Church," on November 15th of the same year. They were holding their services in a building which Dr. LORD himself has thus described: "The edifice was rudely constructed of hemlock boards doubled upon scantling and filled in with tan-bark; its cost was about three hundred dollars." By this society a unanimous and hearty call was placed in his hands and was cordially accepted. He preached his first sermon in his new charge in the month of November, 1835. In a year from that time the prosperous young society had completed a church building, at a cost of some thirty thousand dollars. It was, as I briefly described it in the opening pages of this memoir, of peculiar form and build, and a newspaper correspondent of the time described it as not unlike the famous City Temple of London. Here the pastor at once jumped into fame. His preaching commanded great attention; his thoughts were original, and the famous French preachers were not more fearless than was he.

In 1848 the same society, under the corporate name of the Central Presbyterian Church, commenced the erection of the present spacious and splendid edifice on the corner of Pearl and Genesee streets. During its process of erection, on almost any day, there might be seen a tall, venerable man having an eye on the work as it progressed, in readiness to open his purse to meet expenses attending the enterprise. It was the late George Palmer. He contributed largely. Of this fact Dr. LORD, in a sermon delivered soon after the decease of Mr. Palmer, makes mention as follows: "Without Mr. Palmer's assistance and energy it may be doubted whether this noble edifice could have been built." Next to Mr. Palmer, Elder James J. Baldwin, whose name stands at the head of the list of the first members of the church, contributed his time and means; of his means so largely as to considerably embarrass him financially at the time. Others contributed liberally; among the number were the following, now deceased: Geo. W. Tift, Wm. Tweedy, Samuel Smith, Patrick Smith, Joseph Foster, Dr. Wm. K. Scott, Luman K. Plimpton, Horace Utley, Oliver Bugbee, Robert D. Boyd, Arthur and John McArthur, Elihu Baldwin and John T. Noye. Others contributed as God had blessed them, some in amounts which are apt to escape the observation of man, but do not—even to the widow's mite—of the Omniscient One.

The stately edifice was dedicated in the presence of an immense congregation, with exultant services, on January 2, 1852. I quote a reference to the occasion from the address at the semi-centennial celebration by Hon. James O. Putnam:

"I well remember with what enthusiasm the congregation began the new enterprise. Its completion gave a fresh inspiration to Dr. LORD; the congregation was happy, enthusiastic, united. It was proud of its pastor, proud of its material prosperity, and went on its way rejoicing.

"The strong individuality of Dr. LORD and his uncompromising opinions on public questions, brought him and his church in a national crisis into a position of national influence and authority. I refer to his own and the attitude of this congregation upon the slavery question during the administration of President Fillmore. Dr. LORD's celebrated 'Higher Law Sermon' was extreme in one or two of its positions, for in controversies so heated words are not easily weighed with exactness, but it was a powerful defense of the compromises of the constitution. We all stood by the doctor while raged the wordy war. And so the Central Church helped stay the tempest until the nation was prepared to weather it. And when at length the floods came, no pulpit in the land rang with clearer note for the Union and for freedom than this.

"I seem now to catch the echo from these walls of those ringing words of the war-period Thanksgiving sermon of your pastor: 'For myself I had rather the Almighty would sink the continent in the sea, or that the nation should nobly perish on the battle-field for freedom, than submit to this inglorious result, to the lamentable degradation of our national prostitution at the footstool of slavery.'"

In fact, the very ablest papers of Dr. LORD were of a controversial character, whatever their form. He was like the war-horse, of whose description he was so fond. "He saith among the trumpets, ha! ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captain and the shouting." His genius was happy in the stimulus of opposition, and when engaged with a foeman worthy of his steel, he was incarnate courage and power. His lectures, addresses and pen productions would fill volumes. They were brilliant, profound and epigrammatic in style. Prominent among his more celebrated lectures were "The Land of Ophir," "The Progress of Civilization," "The

Star Aldebaran," "The War of the Titans" and "The Romance of History." These were famous.

As a specimen of his "apples of gold in baskets of silver," I give the following sentences, which were pronounced at the close of his lecture on "The Star Aldebaran," after a beautiful description of what that star has looked upon in the past and what it may look upon in the cycles of the future. He says: "Thy grave, oh, hearer, shall Aldebaran watch when the fire of thine eye is quenched, when the bloom on thy cheek has faded, and guard the portals of thy grave until the day when the Master of Life shall cast down the throne and break the dominion of Death. Thy spirit will soon leave its house of clay and pass out upon the universe, and, perchance, to this distant star thou mayest wing thine uninterrupted way; and bethink thee, as thou surveyest its glories, that its light is resting upon the remote planet of thy birth, and glistening upon the marble that affection has reared to thy memory—over the deserted and decaying tabernacle that enshrined thy soul, and which is again to receive it when raised a spiritual and incorruptible body, by that word of power, that from emptiness and nothingness, from darkness and chaos, summoned at the beginning matter and motion, light and life."

In his equally famous lecture on the "Romance of History," having described the origin and results of the crusades, in sentences which are almost as rythmical as blank verse, he asks: "How is it that the Christian and the Hebrew have alike suffered the soil sacred to both to remain cursed by Mohomedan hordes, and all her sacred places dishonored and blasphemed by the sign of the crescent? There is no other explanation than the prophecies of the Bible, which declare that Judea must remain in the hands of the spoiler, and the abomination of desolation continue in the holy places, until

the set time for the return of the Hebrew, when he shall acknowledge Him whom his fathers crucified. And so to-day the mosque of Omar stands on the site of the temple, and the Christian pilgrim must pay a price to behold the sacred places of Jerusalem; he must undergo the scrutiny of a bearded Turk before he can kneel at the sepulchre of the Saviour."

In 1838 a volume of his "Sermons to Young Men" was published. He was a rapid writer, and loved books, as did the grand historian Baron Macaulay. Though his mind was cast in a bold and vigorous vein, yet he was capable of strains of elegaic beauty, as was evidenced in his sermon on the tragic death of young Sprague, the son of our late respected townsman, Dr. Sprague, who accidentally shot himself on Grand Island, while hunting. I quote a few lines:

"He fell without a struggle or a motion; one moment full of life, in the next his mortal remains lay under the shadows of the primitive forests, protected from the sun by the boughs of those ancient trees, which were planted by the hand of God before the vessel of Columbus touched the shore of the New World. There, in the calm quiet of its last sleep, lay the body of our dear young friend, for days and nights, yet no wild beast of the forest was suffered to touch it, no fowl of the air was permitted to alight upon that soul-deserted tenement. With strange instinctive reverence the denizens of the woods respected the remains which are before us to-day, unmutilated and with less change than is the ordinary result of death.
* * * * We may imagine the innocent birds gazing down from the neighboring trees with amazement upon this strange tenant of their solitudes, watching with curious eyes the calm repose of the lifeless body, until the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky, looking pitifully down through the opening of the forest with their calm, pure eyes, till the dawning day."

Dr. LORD was a warm, sympathetic friend. His heart beat in unison with his fellow-men. His home was a place of refuge for the poor and needy. Without children of his own, the children of others, and often of the extreme poor, had the protection and care of his house. These offices were sometimes rewarded with poetic love. There is a poetic beauty in this incident: A poor and simple-minded lad, living in the vicinity, had learned to call the doctor friend. When told of his death, he begged for his little savings that he might buy flowers for the burial-time. He was gratified, and his handful of winter-bloom was placed at the feet of his friend, where they now rest in the deep silence.

Dr. LORD had a dual professional life: Eminent in one, honored in both professions. Why should not his picture be placed in the representative portrait gallery of Buffalo's illustrious lawyers and judges? Still I cannot but recall to mind the reply of the elder Cato, to one asking why he had no public statue: "I would much rather be asked why I have no statue than why I have one." Twenty-five years ago my dear friend established his home in a suburban retreat. There, amid broad acres, beautified by his own hands, and in a noble library, where was gathered the thoughts of the ages, he enriched his nature for the duties of time, and prepared for the limitless future.

Dr. LORD's extreme kindness and friendship to the author of this work was strikingly evidenced over thirty-seven years ago, and in many instances since. As city editor of the *Buffalo Daily Republic*, I reported his sermon, preached at the North Presbyterian Church, on the occasion of the funeral of Attorney-General George P. Barker, and when I took the proof sheets to him for revision, he complimented me on my success in giving the salient points in his discourse.

Not long afterwards I was requested by W. A. Seaver, Esq., then publisher of the *Courier*, to write a biographical sketch of the general for his paper. In obtaining statistics for the purpose, I had occasion to again call on Dr. LORD. During the "interview" he strongly advised me to write and publish the life of the eminent ex-attorney-general. Surprised, and yet deeply gratified at the suggestion from one so eminent, I, upon reflection, concluded to attempt the task. Dr. LORD not only was the initiator of the publication of the work, but he went farther in a business, practical way. He introduced me to our respected townsman, the late Oliver G. Steele, Esq., who then was a bookseller, stationer and printer, at No. 24 Main street, and said to him in my presence: "I will be responsible for the payment of Mr. Bryan's bill to the amount of \$300, for the publication of the work." Within a month I had so far paid Mr. Steele from advance subscriptions that he voluntarily released Dr. LORD. I can add that the edition of 1,000 copies were all sold. Pecuniarily the work was a success, and the kind indorsements of the illustrious William Cullen Bryant, America's poet editor, and the brilliant orator, John Van Buren, together with the friendly notices of the principal papers of the city and state, were exceedingly gratifying to me, and encouraged me to future exertions.

The semi-centennial of the church was a memorable occasion. Friday, November 13, 1885, was selected as the date on which to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its organization. The exceptionally large and representative attendance demonstrated unmistakably the profound interest felt in the historic event. On the wall behind the pulpit hung a life-size portrait of Doctor LORD, enwreathed with the tender grace of trailing smilax, and wearing the august and benignant look so familiar

to us in the long ago. A life-like marble bust of the good doctor flanked the pulpit on one side and a fine portrait of his scarcely less famous wife adorned the other. The esteemed pastor of the church, Rev. John McLachlan, presided, and a felicitous address was made by the Rev. Charles Wood, who for five years was the pastor of the church after the retirement of Dr. LORD. The Rev. D. McLeod, the successor of Rev. Mr. Wood, sent his deep regrets at his unavoidable absence. Rev. Mr. Benton, another old pastor of the flock, also made an excellent address. Rev. Dr. A. T. Chester, who for some time ably supplied the pulpit of the church, and formerly led its weekly prayer-meetings, read a poem, "The Jeweled Cup," which was particularly adapted to the occasion. Then came an historical address by the Hon. Stephen Lockwood, which was characterized by rare ability. The long and intimate acquaintance of ex-Judge Lockwood with Dr. LORD enabled him to form a correct estimate of his religious character, and his analysis of it created a decided impression. The concluding address was made by the Hon. James O. Putnam, and it was distinguished by that elegance of diction, eloquence and profound knowledge of character that have won for the intellectual efforts of our eminent townsman a national reputation.

For a little more than three years after his retirement from the pastoral charge Dr. LORD remained among his people, honored, respected, revered; a constant blessing and benediction to the church. The most cordial relations existed between him and his successor, Rev. Charles Wood.

Before dismissing the consideration of the management of the church, I here allude to one who for over twenty years filled the position of president of the board of trustees. Patrick Smith was born in the Town of Ross, County Meath, Ireland, April 1, 1809. He came to this country with an uncle (his parents

both having died in his childhood), and settled in Buffalo, November 1, 1826. On the first of April, 1832, he began business for himself as a gunsmith. During a long and useful life he filled many positions of public trust. He was elected one of the trustees of the Pearl-street Church in 1849. In 1851, when the Pearl-street Church changed its name and organization to the Central Presbyterian Church, he, with all the rest of the officers, resigned. He was re-elected January 23, 1855, and elected president of the board of trustees December 11, 1861, which position he held until the day of his death. He was, therefore, identified with the Central Church from its organization, and during nearly the whole time one of its trustees. He possessed great sincerity of character and firmness in what he deemed right, with such love for and devotion to the interests of the church and society that he neither lost courage, hope nor faith in its future success. In addition to his wise, cheerful counsel, which was invaluable, he was always ready to contribute liberally to its support. He died December 12, 1881.

Of the Sabbath-school and mission work of the church much might be said. Dr. Hiram H. Reynolds was the first superintendent of the Sabbath-school, and for many years faithfully discharged his duties. Then came Samuel P. Provost, and afterward Judge Stephen Lockwood, who served for ten years. His administration of the duties of the position was able, fervent and highly serviceable. Judge Lockwood was successively succeeded by Messrs. W. C. Bryant, J. B. Sweet, Oliver Holt, A. B. Neill, E. C. Warner, Samuel Seymour and John C. Cobb, who has been its efficient superintendent for the past three years. Here I take pleasure in mentioning that Mr. Oscar Cobb for nearly twenty years rendered important service in mission work by his painstaking industry, zeal and devotion

to the Master's cause. Excellent mission work was also accomplished by Messrs. J. B. Sweet, W. C. Bryant and C. B. Armstrong. From our esteemed townsman, Mr. Oscar Cobb, we gathered as the result of his close intimacy with the subject of this memoir that Dr. LORD was one of the noblest, most magnanimous men he ever knew; he was incapable of harboring hatred, envy, uncharitableness or unkindness towards any man; he was forgiving and generous to a fault. Over and over again would the doctor lend the helping hand to those who needed it.

Dr. LORD, while being what is commonly styled a learned or profound man, was singularly free from pedantry. He had no desire to parade any of his attainments. He was a thorough English scholar, but not eminent as a linguist. He was one day in my office on Washington street, and I pointed out to him a fine steel engraving of the distinguished French tragedienne, Rachel, at the same time pronouncing her name with the French accent. He at once looked up at me and said, "No more of this French accent—call her after the good old English style, Rachel, and done with it. You and I are more at home in the English language."

As illustrating the large-heartedness of Dr. LORD, unlike most public men, he was always ready to attribute the best motives, whenever the proofs to the contrary were not overwhelmingly great. To his kindness of heart, great enough to embrace even the dumb creatures, many testimonials might be given. Strong as his reasoning powers were, his heart was stronger, and very often, because of pity, he thrust his hand deep into his pocket against his better judgment. He was so frank himself that it was hard to convince him that all were not equally honest in making those statements which so aroused his sympathy.

In reviewing the life-work of Dr. LORD it can be said that throughout a long and eventful career he illustrated the highest type of American citizenship. He was ever true to his country, true to the constitution and, above all, true to the cause of our heavenly Father.

On Sunday, the twenty-first day of January, 1877, at the hour of evening service, his spirit took its flight to the upper sanctuary, and, in a few days after, all that was mortal was borne by loving hands to his last resting-place in Forest Lawn, within sight of the home where he spent twenty-five happy years. A beautiful monument, erected by his friend, our late large-brained and large-hearted fellow-citizen, George W. Tift, marks the grave of Buffalo's great citizen and eminent divine.

BIOGRAPHY OF MRS. JOHN C. LORD.

MRS. JOHN C. LORD was a Christian philanthropist whose life was consecrated to offices of religion and humanity. Her originality, her strongly marked individuality, her disregard of the conventionalities of "society"—when by society is meant mere fashion and gaiety—her wit and humor, her generous and loyal nature, and her labors for the protection of our domestic animals against the cruelty of man, endeared her to all who came in contact with her and justly entitle her to grateful and enduring remembrance. Neither bronze, nor marble, nor a grand mausoleum are necessary to perpetuate her fame and memory. They are engraven and interwoven in the hearts and affections of thousands in the beautiful city in which she was born, lived and adorned, and will be fondly cherished by all who love true womanhood, unselfish devotion to duty, and chivalrous qualities of head and heart. As I write these introductory lines I recall to mind this rare woman, whose presence graced alike the mansions of the opulent and the cottages of the humble.

I recall to mind her never-failing interest in all that concerned Buffalo, in all that related to the Pearl-street (now Central Presbyterian) Church, in all that concerned the elevation of her sex and our race. No more will we be gladdened with her sunshiny manner or behold her gaily riding behind her historic Shetland ponies. Unique, singular, unaffected, she made us all love the pure, the simple and the beautiful

more, and detest from the bottom of our hearts all shams and affectation. Such a character is seldom met with in any land. Would that we had more such notable illustrations of the capacity of true human nature for good.

My purpose will be accomplished if I succeed in impressing upon those who were unacquainted with the subject of this memoir some of her distinguishing traits. Here was a woman born in affluence, and surrounded with luxury and refinement, educated with care and brought up amidst the most sterling society associations, under a parental roof where she was the idol, who preferred asserting everywhere those simple yet exalted qualities that grace her sex, and in Christian and benevolent work acting well her part, rather than to be a society belle and live for mere fashion and the frivolities of a "set." Such an influence was most salutary and encouraging, and as long as true worth is prized will the name of Mrs. JOHN C. LORD be revered.

Mary Elizabeth Johnson was born in the Village of Buffalo, on January 6, 1812. Her father was the late Dr. Ebenezer Johnson, one of its most prominent and influential citizens. During the days of peril consequent upon the war with Great Britain, when the village was burned by the enemy, Dr. Johnson was an army surgeon in the public service. The young mother, with her child, made her escape to Williamsville, returning to Buffalo as soon as personal safety was assured. Subsequently Dr. Johnson returned to the village and renewed the practice of his profession. He won wealth, position and political distinction. He was the first mayor under the city charter, and his home was a sort of baronial castle. In fact, the home of Mrs. LORD'S girlhood was one of the early landmarks of the town. The "Cottage," now the Buffalo Female Academy building, was the village mansion, and the park in

which it was situated was of the private grounds connected with it.

In this connection I cannot refrain from paying a just tribute to the Buffalo Female Academy, which commenced its thirty-sixth academic year on the twenty-second of September, 1886. It is an eminently useful institution. It never was in a more prosperous condition, important improvements and accessories of an educational character having been recently added to it. The beauty of the grounds and the elegance of the surroundings around Goodell Hall; the proximity of the spacious building to Delaware avenue, one of the loveliest in the country; the brilliant as well as solid attainments of the Board of Instruction; the high character of the Board of Trustees, of which Hon. Pascal P. Pratt is president, combine to make the academy second to none in the land.

Its first principal was Professor Charles E. West, now principal of the celebrated Brooklyn Heights Seminary, a gentleman widely known for his ripe scholarship, eminent ability as an educator and distinguished literary attainments. Our honored townsman, Reverend Doctor Albert T. Chester, was the successor of Professor West, as principal, and has held the important position for over a quarter of a century. Dr. Chester is one of the most accomplished, profound and earnest divines in our city, and his rich intellectual endowments and genial, noble characteristics endear him to all who come in contact with him.

In this cultured and happy home John C. Lord, then a young lawyer of boundless ambition, met and won his bride. The marriage took place at four o'clock P. M., December 9, 1828. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. E. B. Smith, at the parsonage.

Mrs. LORD was an original character, of marked peculiarities,

and had her husband continued in the legal profession, her energy and her genius would have been important factors in advancing his public career. But this was not to be. Young Lord, soon after his marriage, to the surprise of the public, left the field of worldly ambition for the duties of the ministerial office. It used to be a playful saying of Mrs. LORD that she married a lawyer, not a clergyman, and she could not be held to the responsibilities of a pastor's wife. She had her own peculiar methods, but she adapted herself to the new position. She brought to it a warm heart and boundless sympathy. She made no effort to bring herself into the regulation methods which congregations sometimes exact of clergymen's wives.

It is undeniable that Mrs. LORD lived a life which was known to the public, and which, being a little out of the ordinary course, might suggest to one not fully informed an intention on her part to be singular, but whatever appeared to the stranger singularity had a substantial basis, and was the outgrowth of settled convictions. She disregarded in a marked degree the conventionalities of society. Her father was a society man, and during the period of life that his daughter was of an age reckoned suitable for society, his social position was inferior to none, and it was his ambition that his daughter should be conspicuous. She was witty, vivacious and uncommonly attractive. Of these qualities he was fully conscious, and it is no wonder that the doting father should seek to overwork the matter. This he did, and the daughter conceived a disrelish for fashionable society which had no abatement in after-life. This distaste of mere fashionable society doubtless caused her to abhor shams and condemn the foolish devices of those who evinced a conscious lack of position by perpetually endeavoring to obtain recognition among the so-called

elite. At one time during the pastorate of her husband there were a few who thought her peculiarities in this regard a hinderance to the prosperity of the church. They wanted a clergyman's wife of different social practices, and better comporting in their view with the course a minister's wife should adopt. This was known to her and she playfully remarked that they should not expect it, as she married a lawyer and not a clergyman. However much Mrs. LORD was commented upon on account of her peculiarities, it is still undeniable that her rare culture, her intimate association with the refined, and her exceptional intellectual traits made her at home in the highest circles. Neither did Mrs. LORD adorn herself in costly apparel for display purposes. She was conscious that her position was assured, and consequently she preferred by her example to appear unostentatious and natural. She abhorred idle conversation and tale-bearing. She knew every poor person in the church. If they were sick or in distress in body, mind or estate she was prompt to aid them.

Their residence was a long distance from the church, and in fall, winter and spring the road was often in bad condition. The doctor, however, rarely failed to be on hand, not only Sundays, but at the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, and Mrs. LORD almost always accompanied him. It was not her way to say, "Husband, it is too stormy, you will not be expected." Instead of this, if it were necessary, she would harness the horse and drive herself.

There are those who, from a mistaken estimate of Mrs. LORD, are inclined to give undue predominance to her devotion to dumb animals, and not give her enough credit for other characteristics. But those who, like myself, knew and saw her in the various walks and relations of life for over forty-three years, were fully convinced that she was invaluable in her

assistance of Dr. Lord, a broad-minded Christian philanthropist, a lover of children and one who unselfishly endeavored to ennoble our race. She lived not for herself alone but to do good. She was the child before marriage of affluence, yet she so lived, moved and had her being as to excite in those less favored by fortune no feelings of envy, hatred or uncharitableness. Again, as the wife of one of nature's noblemen, as the wife of a pastor of one of the most wealthy, influential and widely-known churches in the state, she so deported herself as to win golden opinions from all sorts of people. She was beloved by all whose good opinion was worth having. Numerous instances might be adduced, did my limits permit, of her generosity. She did not weary in well-doing. Her delight was to relieve the suffering, watch over those afflicted, comfort, soothe and sustain those who were weak in body and purse. She was especially fond of children. Her heart warmed towards them. She seemed permeated with the inspired sentiment, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Oftentimes has the writer of this seen her driving by, riding behind her favorite ponies, with a carriage full of little ones; it was difficult to tell who derived the most pleasure from the drive. Wherever she went she communicated to those with whom she came in contact the joyousness of her own spirit and nature.

As an illustration of her sympathetic nature I make mention of one incident which made an ineffaceable impression upon my heart. When the body of our first-born, a beautiful boy of some four years of age, lay in a casket in our Edward-street home, Mrs. LORD (who had known and loved him) came to pay a visit of condolence. Witnessing our grief, and after having taken a last view of the departed, she exclaimed, "Never mind what Dr. Lord says about spiritual consolation

and divine providence; that's all very well, but have your cry out; I would, if I had lost such a child."

Mrs. LORD was interested in many of the benevolent and religious movements of the city. She aided in the organization of the orphan asylum in 1836. She established a tent religious Sabbath service on her grounds, which was kept up for several years during the summer season, attended by the infirm in her neighborhood and by those who had no church home. She was a woman of great energy and of positive convictions. Her opinion once formed she adhered to it. She had a vigorous intellect and a sound literary judgment. Dr. Lord was in the habit of submitting to her literary criticism his carefully-prepared papers, and her criticisms were with him canons of authority.

She was religious without bigotry, pious without cant. She enjoyed the good of life until she could no longer act her part, she then had no longer a wish to live. This was no morbid feeling. It was religious in its spirit of resignation; it was philosophic in its sense of the fitness of the order of life and death. She loved Buffalo as one of its own children who had witnessed its growth from a hamlet on the western border of population to a great city that grasps in its commercial arms the continent. Her father had been a conspicuous figure in its early and her husband in its later history. She shared her husband's faith and pride in the destiny of Buffalo. And no man had a more glowing vision of that destiny than Dr. Lord.

It may be doubted if of all the strangers who sought her acquaintance—and few women were so widely known—one ever left her presence without feeling that he met a character of striking originality and, if there was occasion to reveal it, a heart overflowing with charity. And here was the strength of her life. All her wit and humor, and, at times, grotesqueness,

were never dissociated from the most active sympathy with every form of suffering of man or beast.

The good Scotch Dr. Brown who has written so delightfully of "Rab and his Friends," and Lady Burdett Coutts, who erected the memorial monument in Edinburgh to the dog Bobbie, who for fourteen years did not leave his master's grave, but kept watch and ward through winter's storm and summer's heat, until death gave him release, were not more devoted friends of the canine race than Mrs. LORD. She was always attended by some of her pets—and some of them, it must be confessed, were not "things of beauty." But if any poor waif—and many a waif found her house that had lost his master—lacked the graces of doghood, he received a name of atoning dignity. "Julius Cæsar," "Napoleon Bonaparte," "Grandfather," "Beelzebub," or some other lofty title was bestowed, and he was granted the freedom of the house. The writer was once calling upon Dr. Lord in his library with a gentleman from abroad, who wished to pay his respects to the Doctor and Mrs. LORD. She entered the room with three or four pets in attendance.

The good doctor, more than willing to part company with the "dogs in waiting" just then, said to their mistress, "Dear, what a troop you have brought into the library." "Dr. Lord," she replied, with an apologetic glance for him at the stranger, "you know there are but fourteen dogs on the place, and that is not to be complained of." It is needless to say the dogs remained to do their part of the honors of the house.

A history of the virtues of the canine race could be compiled from her library. Not an instance of fidelity of dogs to masters, not an instance of cruelty to domestic animals, has floated about in the newspapers for years that she has

not preserved. This characteristic so well known is here named because it was so marked and because it was an expression of that sympathy which flowed from her great heart to every creature of God that appealed to it. No appeal from suffering man or beast was ever made to her in vain. Her house was the seat of charity, and the poor had in her an unfailing friend. She was charitable in her opinions. If she could not speak well, she would not speak ill, of people in the ordinary relations of life. But for acts of oppression and cruelty she had words of detestation and abhorrence.

Long before Mr. Bergh organized his protective society, she was the watchful friend of the brute races that serve us. She never saw an instance of cruelty to animals that she did not rebuke, and often invoked the aid of the law to punish the aggressor. There is a story told that she once sat for hours by the roadside waiting for a cruel teamster either to unload or get another horse to aid in drawing the load. He tired first and obeyed her command. When Mr. Bergh organized the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, she at once put herself in communication with him, and the result was the speedy organization of a branch society in Buffalo, with ex-President Fillmore as its chief officer. For almost twenty years she has labored in season and out of season in the cause. At the time of her death she was the honorary president, having declined, on account of her age, to longer be the responsible head of the society to which she was chosen after Mr. Fillmore's death. Her activity in this line of humanity brought her into relations with humane institutions abroad. In 1882 she received from the Humane Society of Turin, Italy, the "diploma of honor." She was an honorary member of the American Society, of

which Mr. Bergh is the head, and vice-president of the American Humane Association.

In this connection I give entire the eloquent and high encomium upon deceased from the Hon. Henry Bergh, who has won world-wide fame as a philanthropist and noble-minded man :

“In the death of the late Mrs. J. C. LORD the cause of animal protection loses a true and able friend. There are divers descriptions of ‘animal friends’ in the world, each of whom, while they have a certain claim on our admiration, leaves something to be desired. One, for example, is a friend in the abstract. Such a one is shocked at the recital of an act of cruelty, while the sight of it is intolerable. This species of friend is strictly emotional and impracticable, and usually confines himself to mild protests and recommendations to others to abate the evil. A second is endowed with a *pct cruelty* of his own, but sees with marvellous clearness the smaller offense of another. Such a one will clip off the natural coverings of the horse at the approach of winter; apply checks and bits which occasion to the unresisting animal an agony as profound as it is unspeakable; hunt with dogs a frightened hare or deer, or race a baby horse, two years old, using its immature powers to gamble with! A third, regarded by the former as belonging to a social scale too low for aught else than exceptional association, confines his friendship to the contests of animals, holding, as did the late Mr. Kit Burns, that all abuses of them except dog and cock-fighting are eminently cruel and demoralizing. A fourth constitute that vast army of do-nothings, who are full of sympathy, but can never find time to interfere with, or go to court, so they heave a gentle sigh at the spectacle of an abused creature, puff their cigarette, and hurry on to the counting-house!

“Now the opposite of all this was the excellent lady whose decease we are called to mourn. She was wholly practical. Her long and useful life was based upon the hardest and soundest principles of justice, humanity and compassion. Holding in small esteem all those mere external accessories to humane existence, which are usually so much coveted by the world, she devoted the masculine energy of her nature to the defense of those humble creatures, which give to mankind more than half the benefits they possess. Soon after the organization of the parent society of America for the protection of animals, she identified herself with the good work in her native City of Buffalo, summoning to her aid the late President Fillmore, and other philanthropic citizens.

“For many years she labored in this humane vineyard, and lived long enough to see the seeds she planted ripen into a bounteous harvest. Few persons know the strong beauty of her character or appreciate her philanthropic labors in the cause of humanity to man and beast better than the undersigned, nor is there one among the vast army of her friends, who more respected her while living, or now honor her memory more profoundly than he.

HENRY BERGH.”

From Philadelphia came the following feeling tribute:

“At a stated meeting of the Woman’s Branch of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, held on Wednesday, June 24, 1885, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

“*Whereas*, By the death of Mrs. JOHN C. LORD, of Buffalo, Honorary President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in that city, honorary member of the American Society and Vice-President of the American Humane Association, the cause has lost a friend remarkable for her

generosity, courage and nobleness of nature, and for a large charity which embraced in its scope all created beings; one who exerted herself to relieve the sufferings of animals before societies for their protection had existence in this country;

"Resolved, That while such a loss must be felt by all who love the merciful and just, it is far more keenly felt by those who were personally associated with the large-hearted lady, and who loved her as a fellow-worker, a helper or a friend.

"Resolved, That the managers of the Woman's Branch of the Pennsylvania Society hereby tender their sincere sympathy to the Buffalo Society and to the bereaved family.

ELIZABETH MORRIS,
Secretary."

As an instance of Mrs. LORD's detestation of affectation, I recall the incident of her presentation of a historical play or burlesque given for the benefit of the Old Settler's Festival, in which she made the heroine a Mrs. Dolittle, who made a six-months European trip and traveled much. When she came back she was a bundle of mannerisms, changed her name to Du-la-tell, and put on all manner of style of the peacock order. There are those of the Du-la-tell stripe in all communities, who are not too old to learn wisdom by experience.

Her long and painful illness revealed all the sweetness of her nature. Her thoughtfulness for her kindred attendants, for her physicians, for her absent friends, were unfailing. She was ever self-denying, self-forgetting. It was the occasion, too, of many demonstrations of the public interest and regard. Her last days developed more clearly than before her deep-seated, profound Christian character. Her conversations to her intimate friends were permeated with sweet resignation, and exhibited a willingness to meet her Maker. She seemed ripe for heaven.

The final breaking up of that home, for a half century representative of the best consecrations of our city, seems to close an era of local history. Another generation is on the stage playing all the parts of the drama. The record has yet to be made of more loyal devotion to duty than that of this great-hearted woman.

Mrs. LORD, during her husband's large sphere of personal activity and influence, was of invaluable assistance to him. Like many other men who may seem to the world engrossed with a public career, he was extremely sensitive to those domestic influences which were nearest to him, and from which he derived at once his greatest happiness and his best inspiration. In the making of a great man there is nothing so potent as the influence of a noble wife, who is her husband's best friend and counselor, his adviser in moments of perplexity, and who cheers him in moments of depression, making his manly strength more effective as she supplements it by her womanly tact, and whose secret sway is more powerful because it is unseen. Such was the influence that cheered and blessed the late Dr. Lord during his long and active ministry, filling his home with sunshine and giving him the tenderest and strongest motive to exertion. It may be truly said that to Dr. Lord it was everything to have the gentle presence of his wife always at his side. With every morning's light, as he began a new day, her true heart gave him new strength and courage for his duties. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they were not divided." Their deeds of charity will long be remembered. The poor had in them unfailing friends. It is said that Dr. Lord spent all his salary in acts of benevolence.

But I must close this memoir. On the twenty-sixth of May, 1885, in the beautiful home in which she had so long lived

with her beloved companion in life, Mrs. JOHN C. LORD'S spirit ascended to the God who gave it. In bidding farewell to this rare couple, whose "biographies" I have merely outlined, I cannot resist the temptation to reproduce the immortal lines from "Thanatopsis," which I have fondly cherished from my boyhood :

"So live that, when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan that moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon ; but, sustained and sooth'd
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM G. BRYAN.*

Characteristics—Governor Seymour—Remarks on his Character—Birthplace—Parents—His Early Education—Apprenticeship to the Printing Business—Commences the Study of Law—Obstacles in his Way—Continues the Study of Law with Judge Taggart—Admitted to the bar—A Partner of General Martindale—Ogden Land Company Litigation—Mr. Bryan's connection with it—Company Attempts to Remove the Indians from their Reservation—Jacob Thompson, Secretary of the Interior—General Denver—Caroline Parker, the Educated Indian Girl—Her Influence in the Controversy—Mr. Bryan Sustains the Indians—With Messrs. Martindale and Follett, Visits the President—Proceedings at Washington—Mr. Bryan's Connection with the Legal Profession—His Political Career—His Character as a Writer—As Speaker—His Speech on the Death of Lincoln—His Speech on Laying the Corner Stone of the New York Institution for the Blind—Letter of George W. Clinton—Speech before the Genesee Agricultural Society—Lecture on Edmund Burke—Fenimore Cooper—Oliver Cromwell—Mr. Bryan's Marriage—His Tragic Death—Funeral Reflections.

EUROPEANS of thought and culture visiting our national capitol express great surprise and disappointment at the absence of eminent ability in our halls of congress. Neither the senate chamber, which once resounded with the eloquence of such intellectual giants as Clay, Webster and Calhoun, nor the popular branch of our national legislature, which in times past was dignified by men of historic reputation, like John Quincy Adams, and John Randolph, of Roanoke, now impress the spectator with any extraordinary respect for the talents and attainments of the men who make the laws and are supposed to govern the destinies of the republic. Neither in statesmanship, nor in ability as debaters, nor in the graces of scholarship, do those who are at the head of the nation come up to the generally accepted high position

* By special permission, from L. B. Proctor's "Bench and Bar of New York."

conceded to our country among the principal powers of Christendom. We know better than our visitors how to account for this apparent decadence in our nation. We know that so flagrantly corrupt has become the machinery of party politics, that with rare exceptions the best men, the really ablest men in our land, are not now as of old to be found in official positions. Yet, neither in the learned professions, nor in the army, or in the navy, nor in those who adorn the mechanic arts, or in the great mass of our business and industrial classes, do we discover any signs of this falling off in the standard of patriotism, intellectual ability, development and progression which is requisite for our continued national advancement. So distasteful, however, to men of superior ability and character is the odious doctrine, that in politics the end justifies the means, that they prefer the independence of private life to that surrender of their self-respect and even honor that is too often demanded of those who seek political advancement. Too often, alas, much too often, as we read of gross corruption among those in high places, are we reminded of the truth of the old adage, that the post of honor is in a private station.

Conspicuous in the long roll of eminent names that have conferred honor upon the legal profession in Western New York, stands that of the late WILLIAM G. BRYAN, of Batavia. His career, and the promising traits of his character, strikingly confirm the justice of our preliminary remarks. Deriving no dignity or consequence from official position, he, by his own unaided exertions, achieved a reputation as a lawyer, as an orator, as a scholar and a Christian gentleman, which enrolled him among the most honored and revered in our land. In the language of ex-Governor Seymour: "He was earnest, able, and chivalric. He made himself felt in every circle in which he moved. He gathered force and power as he moved on in the pathway of life, and I looked upon him as one who was to hold still more marked positions in our state and

nation. God in His wisdom took him away when he seemed most needed by his family and state. We can only bow to His decree, and pray that in His mercy He may shape all this for our good."

Mr. BRYAN was the son of William and Mary Bryan, and was born in the City of Brighton, England, on the eighteenth day of January, 1822. His father, who is still living, is a man of rare intellectual faculties, and although he has attained the advanced age of seventy-two years, is still in the vigorous enjoyment of all his mental and physical powers. His mother, who died in 1836, was a woman of very superior intelligence, beauty of person, and grace of manner. She realized the ideal of the poet who wrote:

"None knew her but to love her;
None named her but to praise."

Mr. BRYAN'S father, believing that there were greater opportunities for the advancement of his children in the United States than in their native land, came to this country with his family in 1830, and, after a brief residence in New York and Utica, settled finally in Le Roy, Genesee County, where he embarked in business as a cabinet-maker. Appreciating fully the incalculable advantages of education, he afforded to his children the important aids to be derived from the best private schools and academies. Consequently, the early advantages of young BRYAN were excellent. They were fully improved, and largely promoted his success in after-life. Owing, however, to the financial and general business depression and disasters of 1836 and 1837, his father was unable to continue him any longer at the academy at Le Roy, which he had been attending. And so, with a stout heart and a determination to make his way in the world, at the tender age of fifteen, in 1837, he commenced an apprenticeship to the printing business with D. D. Waite, Esq., then and at present proprietor of *The Republican Advocate*, published at Batavia.

It soon became apparent that the profession of the law was the one best suited to his tastes and rapidly developing powers of mind, and he began to shape his studies and reading accordingly.

In 1838, at the age of sixteen, he entered the office of Hon. Albert Smith, of Batavia, as a student of law. Never in the days of old, or in the present time, did student enter upon his studies with more enthusiasm, or with a nobler and firmer resolve, or with more hopefulness. His industry was untiring. He allowed no obstacles to discourage him. Teaching a district school by day, reading law, history, biography and classical literature in the long quiet hours of the night, attending lectures, and seeking the society of the learned, refined and pure-minded, he soon began to make rapid and encouraging progression. He overcame the want of a collegiate education by his wonderful application, and attained a mastery not only of the English, but of the Latin and French languages. He also obtained a command of eloquence and logic, which ultimately placed him in the front rank of his profession. He entered the office of Hon. Moses Taggart in 1840. The personal kindnesses of the judge so impressed the mind and heart of the youthful aspirant for professional honors, that he became, and continued until his death, one of Judge Taggart's most devoted friends. Quickly and pleasantly glided away Mr. BRYAN's student life, and he was admitted to practice when employed in the office of Messrs. Redfield & Pringle, at the land office in Batavia. He retained an interest in the business of the office from 1847 to 1850, at which time he formed a copartnership with Gen. John H. Martindale, and opened an office under the firm name of Martindale & Bryan.

Upon the removal of Gen. Martindale to Rochester, Mr. BRYAN, with Hon. Seth Wakeman, established the law firm of Wakeman & Bryan; which partnership, together with the most intimate and cordial relations of friendship, continued until death rudely severed their mutually delightful intercourse.

In the spring of 1851, during Mr. BRYAN'S professional connection with Gen. Martindale, an exceedingly important litigation was in progress between the Ogden Land Company and the Tonawanda band of Seneca Indians, involving the rights of the Indians to their reservation in the County of Genesee. This reservation comprised twelve thousand eight hundred acres of valuable land. From that time forward, until the final determination of the controversy, Mr. BRYAN took an active and important part in the proceedings.

In the winter of 1857 one of the actions (that of *Blacksmith v. Fellows*), which had arisen in the controversy, was argued in the Supreme Court of the United States. The court adjudged that the Ogden Company had no right to enter and settle on the reservation, and could not maintain an action of ejectment to enforce their claims under the treaty with the Indians, but must await the action of the political department of the government, and the actual removal of the Indians by the political power. This decision was announced about the time of the accession of the late President Buchanan to the presidency. Soon after the commencement of his administration, with Hon. Jacob Thompson as Secretary of the Interior, and Gen. Denver as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Ogden Land Company applied to these officers to remove the Indians from their reservation. Some years before, during the administration of President Taylor, an attempt had been made to enlist the political department of the government in measures designed to effect such removal; but those measures were unsuccessful, and the then Secretary of the Interior, Thomas Ewing, had declined to take any steps in aid of the land company.

In 1857 their attempt was renewed on the assumed ground that the decision of the Supreme Court had made it the duty of the executive department of the government to interpose and put the company in possession. They were so far successful that Gen. Denver himself went to the reservation,

accompanied by a number of the gentlemen who belonged to the land company. Their approach was the first intimation which the Indians and Messrs. Martindale & Bryan had of the new and hostile proceedings contemplated by the government. They immediately repaired to the reservation, and there met the commissioner, Gen. Denver, in a council of the Indians. The interpreter on the occasion was Caroline Parker, an educated Indian girl, and sister of Gen. Ely Parker, the present Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The presiding chief and speech-maker of the Indians was William Parker, her father. The proceedings of the council were intensely interesting. The Indians were alarmed. It seemed as though their long struggle to maintain their hold on the lands where they had been born—which their ancestors had held from time immemorial—which were now claimed under the provisions of a treaty never assented to by a single Tonawanda chief or warrior, as though all their efforts and hopes had been in vain. The commissioner told them that they must leave; that the Supreme Court had decided against them; and he called on them to declare whether they would go.

The Chief, Parker, replied with composure, that they wished to hear from their counsel before giving him an answer. Therefore, their counsel told them that the decision of the Supreme Court had not been correctly understood by the commissioner, and that it was not the duty of the government to remove them. When this declaration was made, the commissioner said with emphasis that he must have their answer distinctly, would they go or not?

The interpreter, Caroline, who was standing near the counsel of the Indians, spoke hurriedly and apart:

“What shall we do? we cannot go now!”

The counsel replied:

“Caroline, you can but die.”

Immediately she turned, and in a few words addressed the Indians in her native language. It was a scene not to be

forgotten. The old Sachem, Parker, rose, without the slightest perturbation, and with perfect dignity and determination (he was a large and handsome man), and said to the commissioner :

“ We will not go.”

Thereupon, after another short address by Caroline, the Indians immediately arose and left the council-house.

After such a termination of the “ talk,” of course prompt and judicious action became necessary. And here the energy and peculiar ability of Mr. BRYAN were immediately and signally displayed. He knew that the popular heart was in sympathy with the Indians; that justice was on their side; that forcible expulsion would be a hard and repulsive proceeding for the new democratic administration, of which he had been an earnest and eloquent supporter. At once the newspapers began to give expression to the public feeling. His pen was at work. He procured letters of introduction to the President and Secretary of the Interior, from prominent men of his own party; and when fully prepared, in company with Mr. Martindale, Hon. Frederick Follett, and the Chief, Ely S. Parker, he proceeded to Washington.

An interview was immediately had with the Secretary of the Interior. The secretary began it with strong impression that his executive duty required him to remove the Indians. The discussion was earnest and prolonged during three hours; but it resulted in enlisting the powerful sympathies of the secretary, and disposed him to co-operate with the Indians in securing by another treaty, the extinction of the claims of the land company. During the whole litigation, it had not been possible for the Indians to controvert the fact that the land company had acquired the ultimate title to the reservation, which would become absolute whenever in the course of events the Indian occupancy should terminate. The Indians were entitled, when they should remove, to the possession of a large quantity of land in the Indian territory in the south-

eastern part of Kansas. But they repudiated all claims to this Kansas domain, asserting that they were not virtual parties to the treaty assigning it to them. In these circumstances, the solution considered by the secretary was the resumption of these Kansas lands by the government and the purchase for the Indians of the title of the land company to the Tonawanda reservation instead. The only danger to be apprehended was that the land company would refuse to sell, except at exorbitant prices. However, Messrs. Bryan and Martindale were willing to relieve the secretary from all trouble in that regard, and to assume the difficulties of the negotiation, which they foresaw would be insurmountable, if the executive department of the government, resuming the ground taken by the former Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Ewing, should decline to expel the Indians by force.

The secretary recommended that an interview be had with the president the following day. By his procurement, an appointment was made by the president to receive the "Tonawanda delegation" at 12 M., and to confer with them thirty minutes. The delegation got ready. Mr. Martindale, with the co-operation of his assistants, prepared a condensed statement of their case. Shortly before twelve, as they supposed, on the next day, they repaired to the White House. Being ushered into the executive chamber and introduced to the president, he looked at his watch and admonished them that they were five minutes behind the time appointed. Mr. Follett apologized, and placed the delay to the fault of the clock at Willard's Hotel. Mr. Martindale then said that they appreciated the importance of condensing what they had to present, that they had accordingly put their case in writing, and would proceed to read it, making such explanations as would enable the president immediately to comprehend it.

"That is right, Mr. Martindale; that is the way such business should be done," replied the president.

The reading proceeded; the president became interested, and when it was concluded, he said:

"Gentlemen, tell me what you want?"

The reply was prompt.

"Either let us alone until we have finished our struggle in the courts, or, take the Kansas lands, and give us the government price in money, and we will buy our place."

The president rejoined:

"Why not, Mr. Commissioner" (addressing General Denver, who was present), "why shouldn't we give them the money and cut this Gordian knot?"

After a little hesitation, the commissioner answered,

"I don't know why not."

The delegation were very naturally quite jubilant. The thirty minutes were up. They rose to leave.

"No, no," said the president, "you will please remain," and he went to the door and told the usher that he was engaged.

The president entered heartily, warmly, considerably into the case. A stranger to it up to that time, he comprehended it at once, and by his prompt and judicious action, secured a band of seven hundred men, women and children, who had no claims on him except his sense of justice and compassion, in the possession of their ancient homes. Events, since then, have had their influence on the estimation in which the character of President Buchanan will be considered; but he will be kindly remembered in that band of Tonawandas—to them, he was the "Good" as well as the "Great Father." During the interview, one of the counsel of the Indians, having professional engagements away from Washington, proposed to leave the settlement of details to his associates and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

"No," interposed the president; "never take a second love until the first one is disposed of."

This was a pertinent and appreciative illustration for a

bachelor like the president. He then added very kindly and truthfully :

“You will never have a more important litigation than this.”

The president then went through with an estimate of the money necessary in the case; indicated that a treaty should be had to consummate it, and finally dismissed the delegation with the assurance of success.

Messrs. Bryan and Martindale then went to work with renewed zeal. It was necessary to get propositions from the members of the land company to sell out their prospective title, so as to show that a treaty would be operative. This duty occupied their time and thoughts during the summer. They were so far successful that in the following autumn a treaty was made between the United States and the government, by which the Kansas lands were valued at two hundred and fifty-six thousand dollars, and that sum was placed at the disposal of the Indians to secure their reservation. After protracted delays in the senate, the treaty was at length ratified in the session of 1859, and the negotiations for the purchase of the claims of the company were actively prosecuted. The President and Secretary of the Interior had determined that the price to be paid should not exceed twenty dollars per acre. Many members of the land company were reluctant to accept that price, and probably never would have accepted it, but for the attitude taken by the government. Finally, the Indians concluded to reduce their reservation to seventy-five thousand acres, and to secure the investment of the portion of two hundred and fifty-six thousand dollars not used in the purchase of lands, so that annuities might be derived from it. The whole scheme was accordingly consummated during the year 1860, and Mr. BRYAN and his associates had the satisfaction of meeting the Tonawandas in council and hearing the exultant and descriptive congratulations of one

of the chiefs, as he pronounced the Indian idea of a title in fee simple :

“Now we own our lands from the center of the earth to the heavens.”

Hon. CHARLES DANIELS, Justice of the Supreme Court, and an honor to our American judiciary, thus wrote regarding Mr. BRYAN'S professional attainments:

“The death of Mr. BRYAN was a positive loss to the legal profession of the western portion of the State of New York. His age, acquirements and temperament placed him in the front rank of lawyers, while his personal integrity and immovable fidelity to the duties of his professional employment rendered him an invaluable assistant to his clients. Whatever the interests were which were entrusted to him, they were always sure to receive all the faithful, earnest attention they deserved. In fact, the zeal manifested by him in the discharge of his engagements rarely allowed him to stop at that point ; for it often induced him to continue and protract his investigation and reflection beyond what was required for the purpose of securing simply a practical conclusion upon the subject which for the time might occupy his attention. He feared to be wrong, and therefore endeavored to fortify his convictions after he had become satisfied that they were right. This, perhaps, is not an uncommon trait in intelligent, active members of the legal profession, but with him it was of a marked and emphatic nature—so much so as to render him eminently well adapted to care for and protect the important rights that are necessarily so often committed to the charge of counsel.

“While he possessed all the acquirements requisite for the advocate, and all the ability for the clear and forcible presentation of matters of fact, he did not appear in that capacity before a jury without evident indications of diffidence. He did not confidently measure the full extent of the intellectual powers he possessed for the discharge of the duties of the

advocate. If he had, the knowledge he never failed to have of his cause, combined with the ease and candor with which his arguments and views were always presented, would have been certain to have secured him very great success in that department of professional practice. This is a failing often found in men of intellect and talent; and it is unfortunate for the public that it is so, for it permits persons of inferior ability to take the positions and enjoy the advantages for which they are too often not qualified, because those who by their acquirements are fitted for them, lack the boldness and assurance necessary to attain them.

"Before the court none of this constitutional timidity was manifested. There he always appeared to feel at ease; and for that reason his cases were well presented, the points in them clearly stated and the arguments properly elaborated. He never failed to see and comprehend all there was of the case he had at the time in hand, and was consequently prepared to enforce his own views and promptly answer those maintained by his opponent.

"He was an accomplished, affable and dignified member of the profession, and his early death has left a vacant space which it will be difficult to supply by any one having so general an adaptation to the discharge of all the duties of the position."

Mr. BRYAN took a prominent and important part in political affairs. From his very boyhood he espoused the principles and advocated the measures of the democratic party. He believed the principles of American democracy were the corner-stone of our civil and religious freedom. He was thoroughly conversant with the writings and teachings of those grand old chieftains who were equally an honor to their party and the nation. The works and productions of the fathers of democracy, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, of the illustrious Thomas Hart Benton, of Missouri, of Silas Wright and Martin Van Buren, were as familiar to him

as household words. He threw his whole energies into the advocacy of his political principles. He was a most effective campaigner. He was as true as steel, whether fortune frowned or smiled upon the party. Whether the democratic banner trailed in the dust as in 1840, 1848, 1860 and 1864, or when the democracy carried the presidential elections in 1844, in 1852 and 1856, he was equally zealous, uncompromising and reliable in the support of what he regarded as the true principles upon which the government of the country should be administered. His voice was heard trumpet-tongued, cheering on the democratic hosts at mass-meetings in towns and in cities, and the productions of his pen animated the democratic columns through the newspapers of the party in various portions of the state. He was, at the urgent request of his democratic friends, once a candidate for the assembly, and just before his death, in 1867, he respectfully declined the nomination unanimously tendered him by the Democratic Senatorial Convention for the twenty-ninth district, composed of the Counties of Niagara, Orleans and Genesee. He was over and over again a delegate to state conventions, several times to national conventions, and in those positions he invariably exhibited ability, tact and zeal. His manly and effective oratory, matured judgment, ever genial manner and spotless character, combined to make him a power in the democratic ranks, and he shared in the councils of those who, like Horatio Seymour, Dean Richmond, Edwin Crosswell, Heman J. Redfield and Sanford E. Church, were its acknowledged leaders. Had he not loved honor and principle more than personal aggrandizement or office—had he been a time-server or trimmer, he could, by turning recreant to his political principles, largely have advanced his pecuniary interests and obtained in addition the so-much-coveted dignities and emoluments of office. But he cared not that Genesee County, and indeed nearly the entire western portion of the state, were politically strongly antagonistic to his party. The

guiding-star of his life was principle, and neither as a lawyer, nor as a politician, nor as a citizen, did he ever swerve from it. Such men give character to a party. Such men attract their fellow-men to its standard. Such men make a party strong in the right. Fortunate would it be for both parties and the country if we had more like him.

As a writer, Mr. BRYAN was able, vigorous, painstaking, and, as occasions demanded and presented themselves, elegant and brilliant. The columns of the principal daily papers in the state, as well as the local papers in Genesee and the adjoining counties, were through a long series of years enriched by contributions from his pen. How versatile were his gifts! How much of research and investigation his articles exhibited! What an affluence of diction was at his command! What a wealth of language! How he threw his whole soul as it were into the advancement of all measures and improvements calculated to promote the general welfare! How invaluable he was to the public interests of his section of the state! How often was his charming eloquence heard in the halls of justice, in the lecture-room, before county agricultural societies, on patriotic occasions and at public festivities! Now eulogizing the illustrious departed—then again encouraging the living. What a bright—what a hopeful spirit was his! How rare were his conversational powers! How he interested, charmed, instructed! How brilliant were his sallies of wit and humor! How he loved the beautiful in art! How he attracted one towards him by his unaffected dignity and true manhood! How nobly he strove to make the world better for his existence! He scorned those who crook the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning. What a host in and of himself! How self-reliant!

It is not consistent with the limits of this memorial that we should publish Mr. BRYAN'S speeches in full, or even give extracts from any great portion of them. Many of them were models of eloquence and classic in their style. He was

always up to the requirements of the occasion. Whether before a court, or addressing an enthusiastic political meeting, or lecturing in the presence of select and discriminating audiences on literary subjects, he was equally happy. We cannot refrain from recalling to mind a few prominent illustrations of his oratorical power. When the whole country was in mourning by reason of the fiendish assassination of the patriotic and revered President, Abraham Lincoln, public meetings were everywhere held to give expression to the sense of the people upon the awful national calamity. One was held at Batavia, and Mr. BRYAN was invited to deliver the address. Few who heard him on that occasion will forget the effort or the orator. From the plaintive opening of the address with "My sorrowing fellow-citizens," to the impressively eloquent close, he was listened to with the most profound interest and unwearied attention. Mr. BRYAN, in a masterly manner, portrayed the enormity of the crime of the assassin. The foul murder of our beloved chief magistrate was a blow aimed at the sovereignty of the people, who had chosen him at the ballot-box. It was the darkest day in our history as a nation, when its constitutional head was brutally murdered by the pistol-shot of Booth. The speaker alike charmed and soothed all present by the exceeding appropriateness of his language and the kindness and sincerity of the feeling he exhibited. In discussing the character and public acts of the martyred president, he displayed so much magnanimity, delicacy and independence of criticism, that he won the admiration and approval of men of all political parties.

Upon the important occasion of laying the corner-stone of the New York State Institution for the Blind at Batavia, on the sixth day of September, 1866, Mr. BRYAN was selected as one of the orators. He had been especially active and instrumental in effecting the location of the institution at Batavia; and subsequently he materially promoted the pro-

gress of the noble charity. The address is such a fine specimen of condensed eloquence, that we give it entire:

"Fellow-citizens: You are this day to witness an interesting ceremony. Our great state has decreed that an edifice of her own shall rise upon this fair eminence, consecrated to the instruction and care of the blind. Its name, 'The New York State Institution for the Blind,' declares that it is to be the child of the state, and the faith and honor of the state are pledged to its completion and support. Genesee may be proud that its beautiful county seat was designated as its site, and that her sons presented to the state these ample grounds. One sad recollection only obtrudes. The eminent citizen, who was foremost and largest in his offering to this and so many other beneficent objects, was not spared to rejoice with us to-day.

"We come to add another to the roll of the great charitable institutions of the world. We come in that spirit which is 'thrice blessed,' to lay the foundation of a structure to relieve and soothe the smitten and afflicted—not in the interest of war, or cruelty, or violence, but swayed by the high and advancing civilization of the nineteenth century—for *mercy* 'hath now her victories not less renowned than war.' New York commanded this structure to come forth. May its walls ascend in strength and grace; may it rank with the first and best in any land, and may its career be long and glorious! Thus hopeful and trusting, let us listen to the voice of prayer and the word of God."

The Honorable George W. Clinton, of Buffalo, in a letter addressed to a member of Mr. BRYAN's family, thus beautifully alludes to the literary power and tastes of the subject of this memoir:

"Mr. BRYAN's addresses were permeated by that goodness which exalts mediocrity, and without which genius is baleful. He was emphatically an honest man, and worshiped truth and the Author of all Truth in the humble, loving spirit of

Christianity. In his literary and historical productions he exhibited nice discrimination of character, a power of meeting exact justice and more laborious research than could reasonably have been expected from one having so many demands upon his time. His style was a model of clearness, with all due polish, and was ornate, without excess.

“From what I have seen of his written efforts, they prove that with an undivided devotion to literature he would have become eminent.”

Can anything be more chaste and graphic than the following peroration of an address delivered by Mr. BRYAN several years ago before a county agricultural fair in “Old Genesee”?

“The pale denizens of city and village, tiring of life on the pavements, are clamorous for more room, and bits of pasture, and fresher air, and hence purchase and improve farms or lots formerly considered outside of and beyond any financial market, and all proper village limits. The extreme outer lots are now prized as most eligible and valuable. If such is the tendency *now*, how accelerated will be the movement towards the farm—country-ward; when each highway is dotted with the most beautiful of our native shade-trees; when the last ugly patch of bushes and weeds has vanished from the fields, and even clumps of forest or woodland are trimmed and cleaned and underbrushed—like so many picnic groves; when farmers’ gardens and flower-pots shall broaden and beautify, and over the farmer’s porch the ivy, or woodbine, or honeysuckle shall creep and twine, and fountains shall spout in the farmer’s door-yard.

“I am not mad, Mr. President, in venturing the prediction that in the perfection of agricultural tillage—in able and artistic management and rotation of crops, in the wealth of orchards and nurseries, and in the number and quality of live stock, ‘Old Genesee,’ less than a quarter of a century onward, will not be eclipsed by the landscape gardeners of

Belgium, or even by the rich and indomitable farmers and cattle breeders of England herself.

"Those will be halcyon days for the true farmers of Genesee—her soil a garden, its tillers noble by nature's own heraldry, her daughters ladies even in their own might and right, and all her sons, industrial or professional, from office and shop and forge, prospered and blessed in the bounty and richness of her agricultural products and the success of a farmer's life.

"In ancient times the sacred plow employed
The kings and awful fathers of mankind,
And some, with whom compared your insect tribes
Are but the beings of a summer day,
Have held the scale of empire, ruled the storm
Of mighty war, then, with unwearied hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seized
The plow, and greatly independent lived."

Perhaps the most classical as well as the most successful of Mr. BRYAN'S many written literary performances, was the lecture which he pronounced upon Edmund Burke. From the exordium to the close, it fairly sparkled with gems. We quote a few sentences: "The reign of George III. presents some of the most striking features in English history. Stretching through a period of fifty-nine years, it gave to the world a series of public men the most brilliant and extraordinary, and it closed, leaving the British empire in the full march of grandeur and prosperity. In the midst of the conquests and convulsions which desolated Europe, no invader had polluted her soil, no danger had shaken her institutions. The armies of France, led by the greatest captain of the age, had been vanquished; her colonies captured, her fleets driven from the ocean. The eyes of the intelligent and stubborn old king, darkened alike by the infirmities of age and the mists of disease, were closed by the fourth Guelph, in 1820, and his remains borne to the royal vaults at Windsor.

“ Industrious to a proverb—frugal to a farthing—irreproachable in private life—versed in the detail of politics beyond any ruler of his day—devoted to the wants of his people, but unflinching in his adherence to prerogative, he outlived all the greater lights which had revolved about his throne. Prominent among the illustrious men of that period stood Edmund Burke. * * * I have in my mind the grand form of an American statesman, now deceased, whose political opinions I did not fully share, but whose great powers none could more ardently admire, who stands towards this generation like Burke and Bolingbroke towards the last—as a man of *full* mind whose *words* were *thoughts*—and who, with prodigious resources of idea and language, combined like them the marvel and the miracle of speaking and writing well—whose grave and pungent sentences are destined to the reverence of future ages. There are many points of resemblance between the statesman of Marshfield and the statesman of Beaconsfield. * * * It was the friend of their latter days—the orator, the dramatist, and the minstrel Sheridan—who said of Mr. Burke, ‘To whom I look up with homage, whose genius is commensurate to his philanthropy, whose memory will stretch itself beyond the bounds of any little temporary shuffling through the whole range of human knowledge and of honorable aspirations after human good, as large as the system which forms life, as lasting as those objects which adorn it. A gentleman whose abilities, happily for the glory of the age in which we live, are not intrusted to the perishable eloquence of the day, but will live to be the admiration of that hour when all of us shall be mute and most of us forgotten.’ ”

His appreciation of the writings and style of the illustrious literary men of our day and generation may be inferred from the following extracts from the lecture which Mr. BRYAN delivered before the Batavia Lyceum, on January 4, 1860:

“ In the loss of statesmen and orators following each other in the dread path in rapid succession the country has mourned

its Calhoun and Clay and Webster—a matchless trio—who had become, as it were, so many powers in the state, self-existent, self-sustaining, and independent of the caprices of political fancy. They expired when their intellects were still in full vigor and their forces still waxing stronger—they all met death with the robes of office about them, and with official duties still undischarged. On the fifth day of September, 1851, at his residence in Cooperstown, near the banks of that beautiful lake, and amidst scenery which his pen has so vividly illustrated, yet in the prime of advanced manhood, with faculties unimpaired, and with the strongest assurances of comfort from faith in that religion which he had believed and practiced from infancy—died the great American novelist, James Fenimore Cooper. One of the most brilliant and original of our literary lights was extinguished by the inevitable messenger, and he who had so often depicted with thrilling accuracy the last hours of the soldier and civilian—the flight of the spirit into the unknown world, from camp or wilderness, or war-path amid the tiger strife of battle, was himself introduced into its awful precincts. * * *

“He founded two new schools of literature, and made them exclusively his own. He was among the first who enabled us, in reply to the question, ‘Who reads an American book?’ to answer, ‘The world.’ He has illustrated with matchless energy and beauty all that is sublime and interesting in the scenery of his country. He has exalted the position of that country among reading and thinking classes of every country. On the Rhine, the Volga, the Ganges, at Ispahan, wherever a book-stall can be reached, he is the companion of prince and of peasant, and the fire of his blazing imagery loses but little force in translation. While others imitated in tame mediocrity the leading writers of the old world, he invented a style and subjects of his own. While others copied, he produced originals. While others were content with an approach to the European standard, like a true American he sought to make a

higher standard for himself. Where even the name of Washington is scarcely known, the fame of the great American novelist has extended, and in climes where the speeches of our statesmen are never read, the beauties of Cooper are as household words. * * *

“Sir, his works will bloom in perennial beauty when the colors of the painter shall have faded and the arch of the sculptor be broken. The efforts of true genius are immortal and cannot, but by annihilating, die.”

How much thought, how much grandeur of expression are contained in the above sentences! What a pure, what an ennobling imagination was his! In a lecture upon Oliver Cromwell, Mr. BRYAN displayed remarkable descriptive power, as is exhibited by the following extract :

“Wherever the English language is spoken or the English common law adopted, the name of Chief Justice Hale is a synonym for whatever is sagacious in legal judgment or unpurchasable in judicial integrity. Milton was the Latin or Foreign Secretary of Cromwell, and the fast friend of his administration. That administration he defended in a series of papers of transcendent ability and elegance. He conducted several of its negotiations and wrote some of its most finished correspondence. Not even in his ‘Paradise Lost’ does he stand upon a pedestal of higher or more unapproachable excellence than in those voluminous essays in defense of civil and religious liberty and the freedom of the press. His stately pen, that never, never for a moment laid aside its costly lore or its austere majesty, was frequently employed by the parliament to answer and to silence the attacks of its unrelenting and accomplished opponents. The best and finest parts of each contending faction seemed to be embodied in his life and opinions. Now, and centuries hence, his name will never be mentioned by the scholar or the student without emotions of the most wonderful admiration and the most profound reverence. Before his brilliant fancy were unveiled spirits too

bright for earth. Angels clad in celestial armor and the sapphire fount; the crystal walls; brooks that rolled on orient pearl; Hesperian fruit; flowers worthy of paradise; stones of costliest emblem. To his ear intent were wafted the chorus of the cherubim and the sounds of their golden harps."

Mr. BRYAN was married on the twenty-fourth of February, 1848, to Miss Ruth Beardsley, daughter of Dr. Theodore Beardsley, of York, Livingston County. This union was of unalloyed happiness, and their home at Batavia has ever been the seat of refinement and hospitality. Mrs. Bryan, who survives her beloved partner in life, is a lady whose accomplishments and attainments, as illustrated for upwards of twenty years, have won for the educational institution of which she is principal, a reputation second to none in the state. One child only, a daughter of seventeen, survives her father. One brother, Mr. George J. Bryan, now and for many years editorially connected with the daily press of Buffalo, and Mr. BRYAN's father are all that the ravages of time have spared of a family of eight persons.

But this honorable and useful career was soon to close. On the twenty-fifth day of October, 1867, at Burlington, Iowa, nearly a thousand miles away from his home—far away from his devoted and sorrow-stricken wife and beloved daughter—far away from the scene of his labors and triumphs in life's battle—far away, too, from the hills and valleys of old Genesee—despite the untiring and heroic efforts to avert his inevitable fate which were put forth by those who cared for him and watched his last moments, the spirit of WILLIAM G. BRYAN ascended to the God who gave it.

It appears that Mr. BRYAN, then on a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Carper, at Burlington, Iowa, was taking a ride in a buggy with Mrs. Carper, and when in the vicinity of Olmstead's Mills, near that city, they halted for a passing train of cars. On starting up the horse, Mr. BRYAN accidentally dropped one of the lines, and was in the act of reaching over the dash to recover

it when the animal made a sudden start, throwing Mr. BRYAN with great violence across the buggy, striking the back of his neck on the wheel; he still clutching the line the horse was drawn around, upsetting the vehicle and throwing them both out. Those who witnessed the accident state that the first fall was the fatal one, as he was evidently insensible after that. The physicians are of the opinion that the spinal cord was so injured as to paralyze the brain, causing immediate insensibility, from which he never recovered.

The feeling of regret inspired by his untimely decease was universal. It was not confined to formal notices from courts, nor to eulogies from his professional brethren, who felt that one eminent in their ranks had fallen. The merchant in his counting-house, the mechanic in his shop, the laborer leaning over his hod, and the sturdy yeomanry in their quiet homes, heard the announcement with heartfelt sorrow. A committee, exceptionally large in numbers, composed of the representative men of Genesee County, proceeded to Buffalo, where they met the remains of their late beloved friend and escorted them to that home at Batavia which, but a few days before, he had left in the full vigor of his noble faculties. Too full for utterance were the hearts of those friends of his boyhood and of his maturer years, as they marched silently and respectfully behind the now inanimate form of one who, when living, was so near and dear to them.

The honors paid to the memory of Mr. BRYAN were of the most impressive character. The members of the bar of Genesee County, the citizens of Batavia, without distinction of party, and vestry of St. James' (Episcopal) Church of Batavia, in which Mr. BRYAN was an honored associate, met in due time and gave expression, in touching and appropriate language, to their profound sense of the great and almost irreparable loss not only Genesee County but the state had sustained. Many daily and weekly papers in Western New York contained glowing and heartfelt eulogies of deceased. The Batavia

Spirit of the Times came out with all the inside columns draped in mourning, a tribute, so far as our knowledge extends, never before paid to a private citizen.

The funeral of Mr. BRYAN took place on Thursday, October 31, 1867. The services were held at St. James' (Episcopal) Church, and a very large concourse of the inhabitants of Batavia and vicinity, as well as from the neighboring cities and villages, assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to the honored dead. The merchants closed their stores and business generally was suspended in town. The services were conducted by the Rev. M. Fowler, the pastor of the church, and were listened to with the most profound attention. The remains were then conveyed to the cemetery, being followed to their final resting-place by a long line of mourning friends. Never was more heartfelt sorrow more unaffectedly and impressively demonstrated.

Such accumulated testimonials of respect encourage us. They assure us that the popular heart is sound to the core. They convince us that true worth and character and real ability are appreciated, even in days when there is so much counterfeit, so much pretension, so much of the unreal. We cannot but deeply deplore the loss of one who led so blameless a life, and accomplished so much in comparatively a short time. What a brilliant future was in store for him! Verily, there is a "Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will." In his almost tragically-sudden demise we are again impressed with the truth and sublimity of that ever memorable utterance of one of Britain's noblest orators (and one which Mr. BRYAN dearly loved to quote), "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

JOURNALISM.

— A PAPER —

READ BEFORE

THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AT A

*Club Meeting, held at the Residence of Hon. Elbridge
G. Spaulding, Monday Eve., Jan. 24, 1876,*

BY

GEORGE J. BRYAN,

Editor and Proprietor of the Buffalo Evening Post.

JOURNALISM.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

No book is without a preface. When a new journal is contemplated it has its prospectus. When a new theatre is opened its manager speaks a piece called a prologue. Sermons are preached from texts. This paper therefore requires an introduction. What the ablest intellects of the world have thought cannot but have weight in arousing interest in my subject. My hearers will be satisfied, I think, with a few quotations from men illustrious for their genius and attainments who, in epigrammatic sentences, have paid tribute to the Press.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, in one of his impassioned oratorical efforts, said: "Give me but the liberty of the Press and I will give to the minister a venal house of peers—I will give him a corrupt and servile house of commons—I will give him the full sway of the patronage of office—I will give him the whole host of ministerial influence—I will give him all the power that place can confer upon him to purchase up submission and overawe resistance—and yet, armed with the liberty of the Press, I will go forth to meet him undismayed; I will attack the mighty fabric he has reared with that mightier engine; I will shake down from its height corruption, and bury it amidst the ruins of the abuses it was meant to shelter."

Our own illustrious Thomas Jefferson, twice President of the United States, said: "I would rather live in a country with newspapers and without a government than in a country with a government but without newspapers."

The first and great Napoleon said: "A journalist! That means a grumbler, a censor, a giver of advice, a regent of

sovereigns, a tutor of nations! Four hostile newspapers are more to be dreaded than a hundred thousand bayonets."

Right Rev. Arthur Cleveland Coxe, Bishop of the Episcopal Church for Western New York, thus speaks in eloquent terms of the mighty power of the Press :

"After all, the Press is king.

"It is the Press that creates public opinion.

"It is the grand fact of the hour that popular sentiment has been educated by the Press up to the point of spurning party trammels and voting on principle.

"Who, then, shall keep our custodians? If journalism is so powerful, who will save us from such journalism as made the Commune possible in Paris?"

One of the most memorable tributes to newspapers ever pronounced was by Bulwer, a prince of romancers, who thus spoke of them with reference to their assistance to legislation : "It is the newspaper which gives to liberty its practical life, its constant observation; its perpetual vigilance, its unrelaxing activity. It is the daily and sleepless watchman that reports to you every danger which menaces the institutions of your country and its interests at home and abroad. It informs legislation of public opinion, and it informs the people of the acts of legislation, thus keeping up that constant sympathy, that good understanding between people and legislators, which induces to the maintenance of order, and prevents the stern necessity for revolution."

In a republic like ours, where the newspaper is so imperial an element, a complete history of its size and progress should not be omitted in the catalogue of the history of the nation. In this view, journalists will bear in mind that anecdotes are incidents of newspaper offices; newspaper men and newspaper enterprise are like the etchings and illustrations of Darley, and Leach, and Nast, and M'Lenan to other historical and social sketches. They should be rescued from oblivion and private note-books. They are the lights and shades, the wit and

philosophy of the editorial sanctums, the printing offices and press-rooms of the land.

Newspapers are read daily by millions at their breakfast tables, in the counting-room, and thrown aside as soon as read, without apparent thought of the medium through which the events of the world, the affairs of the day, the gossip of the hour, are conveyed to their minds, forming their opinions, leading them to fame and fortune, saving them from disaster, and governing their actions. Those who use the telegraph condemn the unsightly poles that stand like sentinels along our sidewalks. Those most influenced by the Press heap upon it the most abuse in public. Yet, no public dinner is given in honor of a military hero, or of an inventor, or of a statesman, or of a novelist, that the Press is not a regular toast. This is a stereotyped acknowledgment of the power and influence of the newspaper. On such occasions are not the accomplished stenographers the most important listeners to the efforts of the orators, in their estimation? Are they not the ears of the great public? I claim that to the Press, the art preservative of all arts, the world is mainly indebted to-day for whatever of constitutional liberty it enjoys. I love to hear the rumbling of the steam-power press better than the roar of artillery. It is silently attacking and vanquishing the Malakoffs of vice and Sedans of evil, and its parallels and approaches cannot be resisted. I love to hear the click of the type in the composing stick better than the click of the hammer of the musket in the hands of the soldier. It bears a leaden messenger of deadlier power, of sublimer force and of surer aim, which will surely hit its mark though a thousand miles away.

It is a highly-prized privilege, gentlemen of the society, in this, the inaugural month of the centennial year of our grand republic, in this, the initiatory of a year of imposing national commemorations, to address the representative men of culture, of thought and character of a city wherein I have spent upwards of thirty years of my life, and upon "*Journalism*," a profession

which has engrossed my energies and occupied my almost entire time for more than a generation of human existence! Yes, dating back to the year 1838, when I commenced my apprenticeship to the printing business in the neighboring Village of Batavia, Genesee County, thirty-eight years have elapsed since I first became connected with newspapers! It was in the office of the *Batavia Spirit of the Times*, then published by Col. Frederick Follett, subsequently twice elected canal commissioner by the democrats. I received, the first year of my apprenticeship, the munificent sum of thirty dollars per year and my board (which, by the way, was very good, for I was quartered in the family of Mr. Follett and they fared well every day). The second year I received forty dollars; the third year seventy-five dollars, and the fourth one hundred dollars. I was also the village carrier of the paper. But, after all, these days of my boyhood were the happiest of my existence—that period

“When life itself was new,
And the heart pictured what the fancy drew.”

I was as contented as Goldsmith's parson, who was “passing rich on forty pounds a year.”

The reason why I embarked in the printing business at the early age of fourteen years, was that my father, in consequence of the financial crises of 1835 and 1837, was unable to defray the expenses consequent upon my longer continuance at academies, where I had been, at Le Roy and Bethany, Genesee County. I derived great benefit from my academic studies, and they inspired in me a great desire to read, to which I attribute my subsequently embarking in literary pursuits.

Before taking leave of this portion of my newspaper life, I cannot refrain from mentioning two, to me, memorable incidents, both of which, I doubt not, will prove interesting to those who hear me, as they possess historic interest. In the presidential campaign of 1840, when Martin Van Buren was

fairly sung out of office by the liberal repetition of the famous campaign songs of the day, such as

“ Oh ! have you heard the news from Maine, Maine,
All honest and true !
It is the ball a rolling on,
For Tippecanoe and Tyler, too.
And with them we will beat Little Van, Van,
Van is a used-up man,”

I was invited by the managers of the Old Line Democracy to attend a mass-meeting of the faithful at Middlebury, Genesee County (since Wyoming County). It was held in a beautiful grove near the village, and was presided over by our late venerable and honored townsman, Judge John B. Skinner, then one of the first men of Western New York. The judge was a perfect master of persuasive and thrilling eloquence, and it devolved upon him to introduce the orator of the day, who was the illustrious Silas Wright, justly styled the “Cato of America.” And never shall I forget the grand and imposing form of New York’s favorite son, as Mr. Wright was familiarly called. Never shall I forget his inevitable suit of blue broad-cloth, with glittering brass buttons and ruffled shirt. Never shall I forget the wonderful chain of argument, the clear, logical train of reasoning, the calm, musical eloquence which he used in explaining the operations of the sub or independent treasury system, the pet measure of the statesman Van Buren. Mr. Wright never condescended to use the arts or gewgaws of oratorical display or demagogical appearances. He was ever solid, plain and massive, true to the constitution and to his country.

Among others present from Batavia on this occasion were Heman J. Redfield, one of the famous seventeen state senators who voted against the people electing presidential electors, David E. Evans and General Isaac A. Verplanck.

The other incident, to which I make allusion in a preceding page, was the trial, conviction and sentence to state prison of

one of the most enterprising, widely-known and, in many respects, notable citizens of Buffalo in the olden time, viz., Benjamin Rathbun. Nathan Dayton, then vice-chancellor and presiding judge of the circuit, presided. The old courthouse in the village rung during that historic trial with the unsurpassed eloquence of Henry K. Smith, of Buffalo. I have heard most of the grandest efforts of our deceased townsman, but I never heard his summing up in the case of Benjamin Rathbun surpassed. It was full of splendid, magnetic bursts of oratory—the impassioned, terrifically earnest pleadings for mercy and justice in behalf of the prisoner, whom he honestly believed to be an injured, if not a totally innocent, man. It produced an ineffaceable impression upon all who heard it; and, if it did not save Rathbun from a felon's cell, it stamped his advocate as one of the foremost of American criminal lawyers. Judge Skinner was engaged in the trial for the prosecution and, as he always did, displayed great ability. The people of Batavia warmly sympathized with Mr. Rathbun throughout the trial, and there was hardly a dry eye in the court-room when the sentence of the law was pronounced upon him, consigning him to Auburn state prison.

But I must hasten on. I finally graduated at the *Times* office with all the honors incident to a printer's devil, and early in January, 1842, left Batavia for Buffalo. Just as I was getting upon the cars, Mr. Jerome A. Clark, then a responsible citizen and jeweler of Batavia, handed me a money package, which he asked me to deposit, after my arrival in the city, at the office of Messrs. Wells and Fargo's express, which proved to be at the bookstore of W. B. Peck, on Main street, near the office of the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*. I mention this incident for two reasons. Firstly, because the package referred to was intrusted to me by Mr. Clark, in his official capacity of unsalaried agent for Messrs. Wells & Fargo's "carpet bag" express, and contained \$3,000; and because, to my then youthful and sensitive mind and imagination, the occurrence was

one of great moment. It seemed that I was the custodian of almost the wealth of "Ormus and of Ind."

Upon my arrival in the city, or rather at the railway station down at the Hydraulics, I inquired for the hotel where I had been directed to stop, and which proved to be a little wooden building, situated on the corner of Main and Exchange streets, and then and now known as the Mansion House. I remember to this day the impression produced upon me during the evening I spent at the Mansion by the rare conversational powers of three gentlemen in particular—gentlemen doubtless well remembered by many of my auditors. There was the tall, commanding and imposing form of General George P. Barker, whose magnetic eloquence, brilliant wit and sparkling humor, elegant manners and faultless apparel, not forgetting the ruffled shirt, will long linger in the memories of all who knew him; there was "mine host" Philip Dorsheimer, a representative German-American citizen, whose dignified, yet unostentatious manner, unflinching integrity and genial and generous social characteristics commanded alike universal esteem and influence; there, too, was Joseph Stringham, who in due time I shall mention in his proper connection with the Buffalo Press, a man of dignified and scholarly demeanor and noble characteristics. All of these personages were what I may term "gentlemen of the old school." And what do I mean by that term? Evidently a man who is careful of his person and whose urbanity and uniform politeness are unmixed with the slang license and so-called independence, generally another name for forwardness, that characterize the manners of our time. We seem to have lost the art of being modest, without appearing to be timid, of being confident in ourselves without being forward, of showing deference to others without infringing upon our own dignity, possessed by our gentlemen of the old school.

The next morning, bright and early, I woke up and anxiously looked under my pillow for the money which had cost me so

much solicitude. My slumber had been disturbed by visions of robbers and highwaymen, and I was rejoiced when I found it safely deposited where I had left it. In due time I delivered it to Mr. Peck, who thanked me for my courtesy and invited me to call again. Before dismissing this incident, I cannot refrain from mentioning the wonderful contrast between the humble and unpretending condition of the pioneer express company of 1842, with the present world-renowned, prosperous American Express Company, whose headquarters is still at Buffalo, with branch offices extending not only throughout the continent, but stretching even across the Atlantic to the old world.

In a few days, through the kind offices of William A. Sutton, who will be remembered as superintendent of repairs on the Erie Canal during Governor Bouck's administration, I obtained a situation as compositor upon the Buffalo daily *Gazette*, then published on Seneca street, near Main, by Bradford A. Manchester and Hezekiah A. Salisbury. Among my associates, employed as typesetters on the *Gazette*, were Cyrenius C. Torrance, late democratic state senatorial candidate, George V. N. Brown, subsequently consul to Tangiers, and Thomas D. Johns, who afterwards graduated at the military academy at West Point. And here I wish to bear tribute to the very superior business ability, remarkable literary attainments and noble qualities and characteristics of Bradford A. Manchester. His career as a publisher was highly honorable to him and may be briefly summed up as follows: On the first of January, 1835, the daily *Commercial Advertiser* was issued, Dr. Thomas M. Foote and Mr. Manchester being associated in the management of the *Patriot* and the *Advertiser*. In 1838 the *Aurora Standard* was merged in these papers, and A. M. Clapp, its publisher, became one of the proprietors of the joint concern. In 1840, he associated himself with E. R. Jewett and Thomas M. Foote in the publication of the Buffalo *Patriot* (then the weekly of the *Commercial*), and continued in that relation for about two years, when he withdrew and

commenced with others the daily *Buffalo Gazette*, which in 1845 was changed to the *National Pilot*, and in July, 1846, it was united with the *Buffalo Courier*, and the *Courier and Pilot* was published by Stringham, Manchester & Brayman, until the paper was sold to Robert D. Foy & Co., in February, 1848, when Mr. Manchester retired from his active connection with the publication of newspapers. It is not my intention to review or elaborate upon Mr. Manchester's subsequent and prominent career as a banker and public-spirited citizen. I can only briefly sum up his to my mind distinguishing traits of character. He was a chivalrous, cultivated, ambitious and unflinchingly upright man. He possessed superior intellectual powers. He scorned a mean act and aimed to make society and business circles the better for his contact with them. He gloried in advancing the interests of Buffalo, and his kind heart and winning social qualities won for him hosts of friends among all classes of our citizens. His powers of observation were remarkably active; nothing escaped his attention. Nor did he see with his eyes merely. He was one whose mind quickly appropriated what was of worth in the things he saw or studied; one for whom, emphatically, there were sermons in stones,

"Books in the running brooks,
And good in everything."

In taking leave of the *Gazette* office, I would say that Mr. Hezekiah A. Salisbury, the senior partner of Mr. Manchester, was a most industrious, honorable gentleman, and enjoyed the universal respect and esteem of all who knew him for his Christian virtues and manly traits of character. Mr. James O. Brayman was one of the editors of the paper while I was employed in the office.

In 1843, finding that the severe labors incident to a morning paper were wearing upon me, I applied to Messrs. E. R. Jewett and Dr. Thomas M. Foote for employment upon their Buffalo

Commercial Advertiser, then as now an evening paper. I was successful in my application and, entering the office, I found myself duly apportioned to a case by Mr. Rufus Wheeler, then foreman of the composing-room. The *Commercial* was edited then with distinguished ability by Dr. Thomas M. Foote, one of the most brilliant, accomplished and versatile writers who have ever adorned journalism in our country. For purity and affluence of diction, fertility of resources, richness and fullness of expression, untiring industry and scholarly, intuitive, natural, graceful powers of description, Dr. Foote had few equals and no superiors. While he often evidenced great power as a political writer; while he unquestionably was thoroughly conversant with the politics and general history of the nation and of the world, he did not seemingly aim to obtain power by entering the political arena. He will be principally remembered, in my judgment, for his splendid essays, if I may so characterize his articles, for his finished and thoughtful pen productions, outside of politics, that fairly exhausted the subjects upon which they treated. Dr. Foote conferred high dignity upon journalism at home, and represented his native land with conspicuous credit abroad as consul to Bogota and minister to Austria during the administration of our illustrious townsman President Millard Fillmore. His spotless personal character was in keeping with his grand career as an editor. In a number of contests with those giants of the pen, Thurlow Weed of the *Albany Evening Journal* and Edwin Croswell of the *Albany Argus*, he displayed intellectual qualities that proved him to be a "foeman worthy of their steel." Indeed, in the opinion of many, he came out of the encounters with them victor. Finally, his literary tastes were classical; his mind was enriched by vast reading and ennobled by pure and lofty thoughts, and he could draw at sight from almost inexhaustible resources and reserves.

Mr. Elam R. Jewett, Dr. Foote's partner, is still living in our city, and his hospitable mansion and elaborately beautified

grounds, out on Main street, are highly prized, not only by their genial owner, but by all who have had the good fortune to enjoy their rural charms. As a publisher, Mr. Jewett was eminently successful. He possesses decided executive ability and rare business talent. May he live long to enjoy his hard-earned competence.

Mr. Wilson, the commercial editor of the paper during my connection with the office, possessed rare power as a statistician, and was noted for his painstaking devotion to the facts and figures connected with trade and commerce.

Of the Buffalo *Courier*, the recognized organ of the democratic party, and one of the very oldest, ablest and most successful newspapers in the state, much might be said if my limits permitted. Its first number was issued some forty-five years ago. It subsequently absorbed the Buffalo daily *Gazette* and the *National Pilot*, which consolidated paper was published in 1846 by Messrs. Stringham, Manchester & Brayman. In February, 1848, it was sold to Robert D. Foy & Co. I knew Mr. Foy well, as I did Mr. William A. Seaver, who was its sole proprietor when I established my daily *Queen City* in 1850. In 1854, the *Courier* passed into the hands of Joseph Warren, Esq., who has been its chief editor and principal publisher ever since. To very high executive ability, Mr. Warren unites many rare gifts as a writer. His style is not only elegant and finished, but he wields a powerful pen which has become widely felt in many a by-gone political and other contests with his cotemporaries. He has also won an influential and prominent position among the active, controlling men of the democratic party.

Gladly would I speak in detail of the many brilliant, painstaking and able assistants, and local editors who have, from time to time, comprised the "staff" of the *Courier*. I can, however, mention but a portion of them: Samuel M. Chamberlin, now deceased, for his powerful, exhaustive and elegant pen productions. All recognize in Robert Hadfield,

now in New York city, a remarkably able, thoughtful and finished writer. All appreciate his solid and versatile attainments, and the admirable use he makes of them. Then there is David Gray, whose scholarly, brilliant and felicitous poetic and prose articles have already won for him a high and enviable position as an editor. His lectures and public efforts have also added to his conceded high journalistic position. Thomas Kean, the widely-known and exceptionally able city editor of the *Courier*, has gained a very high name by his "Criticisms and Reviews," and has displayed an industry and talent generally on the paper that stamp him as very successful and superior in the discharge of his responsible duties. Mr. William Thurstone, the commercial editor of the *Courier* and Secretary of the Board of Trade, has made his department of the paper of great value to the commercial and business interests.

Of the present "administration" of the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, I will here say a few words. The publishers are James D. Warren and another. Mr. Warren has added to the enviable name of the *Commercial*, and it now ranks with the leading daily papers, not only of the state but of the nation. Editor-in-chief Foster is also a powerful and finished writer, and a gentleman of very fine literary taste.

Of Mr. James Albro, city editor, I shall speak more particularly hereafter. He is a decided success in this position. Mr. William J. Morgan ably acquits himself as commercial editor of the paper. The *Commercial* is forty-five years old.

In the presidential campaign of 1844, or rather with the early spring of that memorable year, I took my leave of the proprietors of the *Commercial*, and, fortified with a strong letter from them indorsing my industry and reliability, I left Buffalo for Messrs. Harper & Brothers' celebrated printing establishment on Cliff street, New York. I obtained my situation at Harper's through the agency of the venerable Lyman Cobb, whose school-books gave him a national reputa-

tion. I remained in the employ of the Messrs. Harper just three and a half hours by the clock, the foreman not fancying me from the first, as I was indebted to my position under him to the proprietors, he making it a rule to place every obstacle possible in the way of those who were not placed in his room on his own recommendation. So, thanking the notable book publishers for their well-meant kindness, and feeling that exciting newspaper life, and not the stereotyped and commonplace routine of a book composing-room was my favorite vocation, I, the same afternoon, sought for and obtained employment on the old and unique New York daily *American* published on William street. I remained on the *American* some six months when I got a position upon Moses Y. Beach's New York daily *Sun*, which was said to "shine for all," and which was in the full tide of successful experiment as a penny paper.

It was on the *Sun* that I first commenced writing local or city items, and formed my determination to start, at some time, a penny paper on my own account. The first number of the *Sun* was issued in 1833, by Benjamin H. Day. One cent continued to be its price for thirty years, or till the recent rebellion, when everything advanced to so high a price, the *Sun* was doubled in price, and it will probably never again be a penny paper. During my connection with the *Sun*, it was owned and published by Moses Yale Beach, who, with his son, so successfully managed it from 1837 to 1860, that they finally sold it that year for \$100,000 in gold. At the time I was on the *Sun* it was published immediately opposite Bennett's *Herald*, on the corner of Fulton and Nassau streets, and it was then the highest ambition of the *Sun* to beat the *Herald* in the acquisition of intelligence. The rivalry between the two establishments was great, and sometimes amusing and expensive. I will relate one instance which occurred and which I can vouch for.

On one occasion two expresses were arranged to bring the

European news from Boston to New York—one to run over the Norwich and Worcester road for the *Sun*, and the other to run over the Providence and Stonington road for the *Herald*. The Cunard steamer made a longer passage than usual, and was not telegraphed at Boston till early Saturday morning. The *Herald* was not then published on Sunday, and the *Sun* never issued a regular edition on that day. If the expresses were run, they would reach New York about midnight on Saturday. What was to be done? The agent of the *Herald* determined not to run his express, but he was anxious for the *Sun* to enjoy the luxury. So he made his arrangements, with locomotive fired up, to start the moment the news reached his hands. The wide-awake agent of the *Sun* was not to be beaten. He was watchful. The moment the Cunarder touched the wharf at East Boston, he started with the news to the Worcester depot. John Gilpin's time was beaten through the streets of Boston as easily as Bonner's team now beats all others on Harlem Lane. On the panting and puffing locomotive jumped the indefatigable agent of the *Sun*, and, with one shrill whistle, he was off for New York. The agent of the *Herald*, as soon as his plucky companion was out of sight, and going off at the rate of a mile a minute, had his locomotive run into the house and cooled off. He then went down to the office of the *Mail*, published on State street by Purdy & Bradley, and quietly got out the news and had it printed on extra sheets, with the New York *Herald* head. He took several thousand by one train that afternoon, and sent as many by a messenger by the other regular line. They reached New York about six o'clock the next morning, and the extras were immediately sold to the newsboys. Meanwhile the *Sun* express had made splendid time from city to city, and there was great commotion in the *Sun* office. All was bright and watchful, but quiet in the *Herald* establishment. There was no news there. "The *Herald* is beaten," gleefully exclaimed the happy fellows in the *Sun* building. But to their bewilder-

ment, about six o'clock, they heard the cry, "'Ere's the extra 'Erald, important news from Europe!'" under their very windows. It was too late; the *Sun* was eclipsed that morning.

I left New York in the winter of 1846 for Albany, where I remained in the Albany daily *Argus* office during the session of the Constitutional Convention during that year. I knew Edwin and Sherman Crosswell well, and often wrote political articles for the paper. On December 22, 1846, I commenced, in company with several enterprising craftsmen, the publication of a penny paper in Albany, called the daily *Evening Telegraph*, bound copies of which I have brought with me this evening. But it was not a lucrative investment, and I sold out my interest on the twentieth of February, 1847, returned to Buffalo, and obtained a situation upon the Buffalo *Morning Express*, a daily paper, which had been established during my brief residence in Albany.

The first number of the *Express* was issued on the fifteenth of January, 1846, under the proprietorship of Almon M. Clapp and Rufus Wheeler, as the firm of A. M. Clapp & Co. I can truthfully pronounce Major Clapp, now congressional printer at Washington, a veteran, accomplished and powerful writer. He was publisher of the *Aurora Standard*, as long ago as 1836, and, in 1838, the *Standard* was merged into the *Daily Commercial Advertiser*, the weekly of the *Commercial*, the major becoming one of the proprietors of the joint concern. The limits of this paper will not admit of my elaborating upon even the public, much less the full newspaperial, career of my older and gifted cotemporaries. But I cannot take leave of Major Clapp without characterizing him as an eloquent and forcible speaker, and a journalist of uncommon vigor and industry. He was an enthusiastic, earnest and prominent whig in the days of that grand old constitutional party that was honored with the leadership of Clay, Webster and Fillmore. As a republican, he has performed yeoman service. He is a gentleman of strong, sincere convictions, and, in a political

contest, was never afraid to fire hot shot at his adversaries. He has devoted the great bulk of a long life-time to journalism, and, under his editorial management, the *Express* was a conceded power in its party. Socially, the major is generous and open-handed, and has the faculty of making and retaining warm friends.

His first partner in the *Express* was Rufus Wheeler, whom I knew intimately. Possessing a chivalrous disposition, honorable ambition and uncommon business ability, he was of great service in the early days of the paper, in building up and cementing its fortunes. I never knew a man enter upon the prosecution of a business enterprise with more devotedness and untiring, painstaking industry than were displayed by my friend Wheeler in his efforts to push on his pioneer paper. He labored so assiduously that I have no doubt he shortened his life by his own exertions. Time will not admit of my going into detail with his journalistic career. Suffice it to say, that he made his mark on the *Express*, displaying executive ability and persistent devotion to his business. Shortly after leaving the *Express*, in company with Messrs. J. D. Warren, Joseph Candee and another, Mr. Wheeler purchased the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, maintaining and increasing its good name and position. He was, also, for one year, President of the State Associated Press. His sudden demise deprived Buffalo of a prominent, generous, noble-hearted citizen, whose life had been devoted to promoting its welfare and developing its interests. He now sleeps in our charming Forest Lawn, revered by us all as the home of our beloved ones who have gone before us.

I have before, in this paper, made frequent mention of the *Express*. It has for several years been published by a stock company. At the present time Mr. Bishop is chief manager and editor. Mr. George H. Selkirk has special charge of the counting-room details, and is an able, agreeable gentleman to transact business with. Mr. Earl D. Berry is city editor and

one of the most talented and promising of the young gentlemen connected with our city dailies. The *Express* is in its thirty-first year.

I now come to my connection with the Buffalo daily *Republic*, which commenced with the month of June, 1847. The first number of the paper was printed in 1847, and its first publisher was Quartus Graves. Its office was in the third story of the brick building on the corner of Main and Exchange streets, opposite the Mansion. I obtained the position of local and commercial editor of the paper, through the cordial introduction and indorsement of Gen. George P. Barker and Eli Cook. Stephen Albro, Esq., father of Justice W. H. Albro and Mr. James Albro, the able and untiring city editor of the *Commercial Advertiser*, was then the editor-in-chief of the *Republic*. He will be remembered as a veteran editor, having been prominently connected with the press of our city as long ago as 1837 and 1838, when he edited the *Republican*. Mr. Albro was, in many respects, a remarkable man. He possessed uncommonly vigorous powers, and a rare fund of general information, and his pen productions were distinguished for their thorough and sterling independence, and plain, straightforward common sense. As a political writer he ranked very high. His writings produced marked effect upon the public mind. In connection with our townsman, now ex-Mayor Rogers, Mr. Albro edited and published the *Sunday Bulletin*. It was a highly-respectable and ably-conducted paper, and exercised a healthy influence on the community.

Mr. Rogers was foreman of the *Republic* composing-room during my connection with the paper, and among the compositors' staff was Mr. James Albro. Our host of this evening, the Hon. Elbridge G. Spaulding, was mayor of the city in 1847, and discharged the duties of the office with the signal ability, unostentatious dignity and urbanity that have characterized him throughout his long and eminent public and business career. I gratefully remember the many facilities and

kindnesses which he extended to me during my first year of city editorial duty.

In 1848, the *Republic* passed from the hands of Mr. Graves, and E. A. Maynard, Esq., a gentleman now deceased and then widely known and respected by our community, became the proprietor. Mr. Maynard had had previous preliminary experience in newspaper publishing in Utica. He embarked in the publication of the *Republic* in accordance with the earnest entreaties of the leading members of the free soil portion of the democratic party of Erie County. Among others who particularly desired him to purchase the paper were Philip Dorsheimer, Isaac Sherman, Dyre Tillinghast, Oliver Patch, of Wales, and our lately returned townsman, John Hubbell.

In 1848, Mr. Benjamin Welch, Jr., became associated with Mr. Maynard as proprietor and editor of the paper. Mr. Welch will be pleasantly recollected by many here present as a vigorous, graceful writer of the free soil or barn-burning school of politics. He was emphatic in expressing his abhorrence of slavery, and was thoroughly convinced that the aggressive and defiant attitude even then exhibited by the southern pro-slavery leaders should be checked and resisted. He enjoyed the confidence and respect of the chiefs of the old democracy, Silas Wright, John A. Dix, Preston King and Martin Van Buren. He was on especially intimate terms with John Van Buren (or Prince John, as he was familiarly called), the brilliant and eccentric son of the statesman of Kinderhook. Mr. Welch subsequently became state treasurer, and ably discharged the duties of the station. His early death was acutely regretted by all who knew him.

In 1857, the *Republic* passed into the hands of Cyrenius C. Bristol, who was and is still celebrated for his originality and versatile talents. At one time he was one of the most prominent and successful business men of the city, and was known to the nation as the proprietor of a sarsaparilla that was claimed to be a cure for the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to.

Dr. Bristol was full to overflowing of wit and humor. In fact, I never knew a man with a keener relish for merriment or more capable of constantly portraying the ludicrous side of a question. He was always noted for his generosity and his genial, manly traits of character. During his administration as proprietor of the *Republic* it commanded some of the very ablest and most accomplished writers ever connected with our city press. Prominent among them I will mention Guy H. Salisbury, who was a host in himself; a poet of rich, rare and exuberant fancy; a gentleman of thoroughly scholarly and literary tastes; learned in history, biography and general science, he dashed off finished articles for the press, and his pen contributions enriched the columns of nearly all the papers of our city. He will also be long remembered as one of the most conspicuous of the early and prominent publishers of Buffalo.

One of the prominent editors connected not only with the *Republic*, but subsequently one of the proprietors and chief editors of the *Express*, was Josephus N. Larned. Commencing his editorial connection with the *Republic* in 1857, I need not say that he soon won a most enviable reputation. Mr. Larned is a brilliant, scholarly writer, a gentleman of much culture and thought, and has demonstrated his varied ability not only on the press, but as superintendent of our noble free schools.

Of Dr. Sanford B. Hunt, one of the very ablest editors ever identified with Buffalo newspapers, I can pleurably say that he was a powerful, high-toned, scholarly writer and he conferred dignity and character upon his profession. He wrote at various times for the *Commercial* and *Express*.

Henry W. Faxon was remarkable for his humor and wit. Whether he wrote the famous lines entitled, "The Beautiful Snow," or not, I shall not undertake to determine, but this I will say, that their authorship was not needed by him to establish his reputation for infinite jest and exquisite fancy.

He possessed that uncommon gift that was "wont to set the whole table in a roar."

David Wentworth was a pungent, fluent, polished writer and though he died, like Faxon, quite young, won many encomiums for his editorial power.

Three of the five I have just mentioned as connected with the *Republic* during Dr. Bristol's proprietorship have passed away. In parting with them Mrs. Norton's lines occur to me :

" Weep not for him who dieth—
For he sleeps and is at rest ;
And the couch whereon he lieth
Is the green earth's quiet breast."

The year 1850 will ever be green in my memory. It was the year of the establishment of my present newspaper ; the year of the realization of the dream of my boyhood that I would sometime in my life be the owner of a daily paper. On the twenty-eighth of January, 1850, I issued the first number of a penny daily journal entitled the *Daily Queen City*. My publication office was No. 206 Main street, second story, or, in other words, it was directly over the then popular bookstore of our veteran and universally esteemed townsman Oliver G. Steele. My friend, the ex-president of this society, will pardon me when I here acknowledge the many courtesies and kindnesses he extended to me in getting up the initial number of the paper, and through the many succeeding years. May he live long and prosper.

After about six weeks' time I removed the publication office of the *Queen City* to Seneca street and subsequently to Washington street, near where the *Post* is now published, and on which street it has been published for over twenty years. In 1852, during the presidential campaign, the title of the paper was changed to *Buffalo Evening Post*, and Mr. Calvin J. Mills was associated with me in the publication and editorship. I also published, in connection with two other gentlemen, a weekly paper styled the *Young Hickory* during the campaign of 1852,

and it stoutly advocated the claims of Pierce and King for the presidency. In the year 1853 I again became sole proprietor of the *Post*, and have continued so ever since. Among the notable years, in my journalistic history, was 1863, in which occurred my marriage, my being drafted into the military service of the United States, and my second candidacy for the assembly, which, fortunately for me, resulted in the election of my opponent.

I come now to speak of the German press of the city; of the organs of that nationality in our midst that numbers over 60,000 souls; of a nationality no less renowned in the arts of peace than of war; a people noted for their patient, sterling industry, their integrity and their intelligent, patriotic attachment to our free institutions; one of whose representative men, Hon. Philip Becker, is now the honored chief magistrate of our city and whose enterprise is conspicuously illustrated in the imposing edifice now erecting for the German Insurance Company, and in many other portions of our city. (It is a coincidence worthy of note, that Mr. Becker, after a lapse of ten years, is again the occupant of the mayor's chair, and in good health and spirits.)

On December 2, 1837, the first number of a weekly democratic paper was issued by Colonel George Zahm, under the title of *Der Weltburger*. Colonel Zahm was unfortunately killed by the falling upon him of a hickory pole, on the twenty-eighth of September, 1844, at a democratic pole raising. The publication of the paper was continued by his widow until November 29, 1845. On March 19, 1845, it was issued semi-weekly. From November 29, 1845, Messrs. Brunck & Domedion assumed the proprietorship. On the nineteenth of April, 1853, it was consolidated with the *Democrat*, which was established in 1848 by Charles Essingler, as a weekly, and in 1851 changed hands to Charles De Hass and Fred. Held, and published daily. After the consolidation of the paper the firm name was changed to Brunck, Held & Co. In April, 1855, Mr. Domedion retired

and Mr. De Haas in 1859. Until June, 1875, this partnership continued, and on the retirement of the eloquent and veteran Dr. Brunck from the paper my respected and able contemporary Mr. Frederick Held became its sole proprietor.

In 1843, a weekly German paper, called *Der Freimuetthige*, was established by Alexander L. Krause in the interest of the whig party; it was published only a year and a half. In 1857 another German daily, called the *Patriot*, was issued. It survived but a few months and was published by Messrs. Voght and Young. In the latter part of November, 1845, the Buffalo *Telegraph* was established by Henry B. Miller; the paper passed into the hands of Philip H. Bender in 1857, and he continued its proprietor until its publication ceased in 1874.

With reference to the Buffalo daily *Freie Presse*, I have to say that in 1853 Mr. Fred. Reinecke issued a weekly German paper. In 1857 it was transferred into the *Freie Presse*, but after eleven weeks existence it became again a weekly, under a different firm name. This paper was continued as a weekly or daily until June 8, 1872, after which the present daily *Freie Presse* made its appearance on June 8, 1875. Mr. George Baltz retiring, Messrs. Reinecke and Zesch continued the publication.

The Buffalo *Volksfreund*, daily and weekly, was established and is to-day possessed by the Buffalo German Press Association, a stock company consisting of prominent German citizens. Its first issue appeared August 1, 1868. A week afterwards a weekly was commenced. The *Volksfreund* is ably edited and well managed.

Last, but not least, is the new German republican daily established by Ismaar S. Ellison, on the fifteenth of October, under the name of the *Republican*. Mr. Ellison is a talented, fearless writer, and had several years previous editorial experience upon the *Freie Presse*.

The weekly *Aurora*, German Catholic newspaper, is pub-

lished at No. 131 Batavia street, by Mr. C. Weikmann. It was founded by its present publisher at Detroit, Mich., and was first issued September 27, 1831. On October 4, 1853, the publisher brought his paper to Buffalo, where he has issued it weekly, uninterruptedly since.

I have merely mentioned the German press. I have not, I am fully aware, elaborated upon their merits as they deserve. But, before dismissing them, I feel that I can safely claim for them that they are quite up to the best German papers in the other leading cities of the Union, for editorial ability and honorable business management. Of the weekly religious press, prominent among which are the *Buffalo Christian Advocate*, the *Catholic Union* and *Aurora*, I can only speak in brief terms. The *Advocate* was first issued on the third of January, 1850, at No. 138 Main street. The lamented Rev. John E. Robie, a Christian, a patriot and a gentleman of talent, and noble purposes and aim, was its founder and editor. He was an earnest, chivalrous worker for the good of our race and his demise was profoundly regretted by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

The *Advocate* is now published by my talented and indefatigable co-laborer of the press, the Rev. Dr. A. P. Ripley, the firm name being A. P. Ripley & Co. Mr. Ripley is deeply imbued with the responsibilities devolving upon a journalist who faithfully discharges his duty. I take pleasure in recording my humble testimony as to the signal ability with which he acquits himself.

The *Catholic Union* is issued by the Buffalo Catholic Publication Company, weekly. The first number appeared April 25, 1872. The paper was printed under the special auspices of the Right Rev. Bishop Ryan. Its first editor was Mr. J. Edmund Burke, who was succeeded on the first of April, 1874, by Rev. P. Cronin, of St. Joseph's Cathedral, and who now continues to exercise editorial control over it. It is a

neatly printed sheet, and ably advocates the interests and doctrines of the church of which it is an organ.

During my connection with journalism in Buffalo many well-intentioned and energetic efforts, evincing much enterprise and talent, have been made to establish daily and other papers.

Prominent among these publications was the *Democracy*, a morning paper, whig and anti-know-nothing in politics, established by Mr. Samuel Wilkeson in 1857. This gentleman had previously written able articles for the *Express* while Seth C. Hawley, Esq., was its editor, and he was induced to establish the paper because of his decided passion for journalism and his earnest desire to promote the nomination and election of William H. Seward for the presidency. Governor Seward and Thurlow Weed were so favorably impressed with the eminent ability displayed by Mr. Wilkeson, that they induced him to dispose of the *Democracy*, after he had published it for about fifteen months, to the *Express*, and proceed to Albany, where he purchased the interest of Mr. Weed and George Dawson in the *Albany Evening Journal*. Mr. Wilkeson remained on the *Journal* about a year and a half, when, at the request of Horace Greeley, he went to New York and assumed the responsibilities of day editor. It is proper to say that the reason why Mr. Wilkeson sold his interest in the *Journal* to Mr. Weed was that he contracted inflammatory rheumatism of the severest character, as he informed me. "I wrote up the paper in the forenoon and went to bed in the afternoon, to suffer indescribable torture."

Of the signal ability displayed by Mr. Wilkeson on the *Tribune*, I have not time to speak. Suffice it to say, that few men in our land ever wielded so able and incisive a pen. His assistants on the *Democracy* were gentlemen of rare talent and scholarship. Chief among them were our gifted former townsman, Ellicott Evans, Esq., a ripe scholar and accomplished writer, and the Messrs. Haskins, father and son, both of whom ranked very high as elegant, forcible and graphic writers.

One of the successful monthlies of our city is the *Live Stock Journal*. It was established in June, 1870, by George A. Martin and Henry C. Springer. Its editor was Mr. Martin, who is entitled to the credit of having originated the pioneer paper of its class in the United States. Serious doubts were entertained by its best friends at the initiation of the paper whether such an enterprise would be sustained. Mr. Arthur Christey is now publisher.

One of the handsomest sheets (typographically considered) ever issued in Buffalo, was the daily *Rough Notes*, commenced March 20, 1852, by George Reese & Co. M. Cadwallader, a fearless and eccentric writer, was its chief editor. It was whig in politics, was high-toned and every way respectable, and deserved, what it did not receive, success. It lasted about two years.

Then there were the *Journal of Commerce*, the *Herald*, the *Times*, and many other daily publications, which were only published for a few months.

One of the very latest and most memorable of the hundreds of public occasions or excursions that I have participated in, by virtue of my relations with the Press, was the Centennial Expedition to Philadelphia, in October last, under the affable and efficient direction of Mr. H. L. Lyman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Buffalo, New York & Philadelphia Railroad, and Mr. C. L. Derby, Centennial agent. Gorgeously equipped and handsomely decorated Pullman palace cars, amidst the roar of cannon, the melodious strains of the Union Cornet Band, and the enthusiastic cheers of thousands of our citizens, left the depot of our Buffalo, New York & Philadelphia Railroad, and with lightning speed were soon steaming for the Keystone State. Never was there a lovelier autumn day. Never did the brilliant foliage of our matchless forests so nearly rival the colors of the rainbow. Our ride to the City of Brotherly Love was a perfect and continuous ovation. Fraternal and brotherly was our greeting and princely were

the hospitalities and entertainments lavished upon us by the merchants of Philadelphia.

Among other notable places we visited was Independence Hall, sacred to American liberty, and as I stood within its hallowed precincts and surveyed the portraits and the surroundings of the grand old patriots of the revolution,—as I beheld the familiar faces of Washington, of Jefferson, of Franklin, of Hancock, of the elder Adams and their compatriots, I could the better appreciate the pathos with which the inimitable Webster uttered the words, “Thank God that I am an American citizen.” I was profoundly impressed, too, with the vastness, the grandeur, the exquisite adaptation for the purposes for which they are designed, of the Centennial Exposition buildings on Fairmount Park. There they stand, models of art in the midst of a magnificent panorama of nature; there they stand, a vast river flowing by, in full sight of an historic city of near a million of souls, in the distance, and grand old trees and beautiful drives and walks, giving variety and interest to the scene; there they stand, emblems of advancing civilization—of those benign and heavenly utterances of “Peace on earth and good-will towards men.” And, gentlemen, it was to my mind, a never-to-be-forgotten scene, when, at the grand banquet at Belmont Hall, ex-Governor Bigler, of Pennsylvania, a venerable statesman, full of honors and of years, pronounced a glowing eulogy upon the magnanimous action of the British government and Queen Victoria in coming forward so liberally in aid of the exposition. He said every government on this continent, great and small, will be represented; also all the great nations of Europe and the Asiatic and Oriental countries. The foreign out-look is truly grand, and amongst the most delightful incidents and developments in this connection is the magnanimous course of the English government and people in putting away all thought about the early disobedience of their colonies. (Great cheering from all parts of the hall, waving of handkerchiefs,

clapping of hands, the immense audience finally yielding to a very general impulse, and manifesting their appreciation of the co-operation of Great Britain, by rising to their feet as one man, and joining in the tumult of applause.) A gentleman then proposed three cheers for Great Britain, and the call was responded to with deafening cheers, in which all present joined with hearty good-will! "The queen acted a noble part in this generous work," said Governor Bigler. "God bless the queen!" Here the Hon. Frederick Fraley proposed three cheers for the queen, which were given with rare heartiness.

These unmistakable evidences of the completeness of the amity that now prevails, thank God, between the two great English-speaking races of the earth, I hail with deep joy. We are two people, boasting a common origin, a common language, a like literature, worshipping the same God, and animated and inspired by a like undying attachment to the eternal principles of constitutional liberty. As I took the last lingering look of the Centennial edifice, I recalled to mind Webster's magnificent apostrophe to the Union: "God grant that when my eyes shall behold for the last time the sun in the heavens, that they may not fall upon states rent in twain by internal feuds, or drenched, it may be, with fraternal blood. God grant that the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now full high advanced and recognized and honored throughout the civilized world, may bear upon its ample folds no such miserable interrogatory as 'What is all this worth?' but that other sentiment near and dear to every American heart—a sentiment that ought to be engraved in letters of gold and floated from every flag-staff and house-top throughout the land, 'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!'"

Gentlemen, I confess that it is not without emotion, that I now proceed to sum up my journalistic career in Buffalo. A citizen as long ago as 1842—connected with the daily press ever since that time—commencing editorial life as local of the *Republic*, June, 1847, and founding my own paper in January,

1850, I indeed feel that I am a Buffalonian. Since my residence here—during my newspaperial career, a whole generation has passed away. What mighty changes have I witnessed and chronicled! Empires and dynasties have risen and died and faded into the shadowy past! What triumphs of civilization, what wondrous achievements in all that promotes the glory and enduring happiness of our race! Prominent among those events was the annexation of the Lone Star Republic of Texas to the Union. The short, sharp and decisive war with Mexico, the heroic achievements of Gen. Zachary Taylor, and the triumphal march of America's Wellington, Gen. Winfield Scott, to the city of Mexico—aye, to the very halls of the Montezumas. The columns of my paper were draped in mourning upon the death of the beloved Taylor, and duly narrated the accession to power and admirable administration of our now, alas! deceased statesman and townsman, Millard Fillmore.

It has fallen to my lot to announce the successful establishment of ocean steam navigation; the consummation of the greatest of art wonders, the Atlantic cable, the encircling and binding together of the whole civilized globe by magnetic wires, and the uniting of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans by the iron bands of the Pacific railway. How cruel, sanguinary wars have devastated the earth during the life-time of the *Post*. There was the gigantic wars between Russia and the allied powers, terminating in the capture of Sebastopol; the Franco-Austrian and the Franco-German struggle, and, towering above all in its colossal proportions, our own civil war. What a procession of memorable events passed before us during that trying period in our nation's life. One million of Northern freemen fired with indignation at the fall of Fort Sumpter, flew to arms that the fairest republic of earth might live.

My columns and extra *Posts* photographed the fall of Fort Donaldson, Vicksburg and Memphis; Sherman's march to the sea and Sheridan's ride to Winchester twenty miles away!

who has even adequately painted the mighty battles before, and the fall of the rebel stronghold, Richmond; the final culmination of all in the capitulation of Lee's exhausted forces to the grand Union army with its illustrious commander, Ulysses S. Grant! It has been my privilege to record the blotting out of the foul stain of African slavery from our national escutcheon, thanks to the immortal proclamation of Abraham Lincoln, backed by the loyal North. And how we were all stunned, as it were, when we heard of the wicked assassination of that man of the people, who, springing up from the humblest walks of life, was twice elevated to that lofty and unsurpassed position of power, the presidency of the United States.

I have portrayed the universal, the profound grief of the nation as its statesmen, orators, authors and other shining lights were gathered to their fathers; there were the lofty, the severely intellectual John C. Calhoun, the great man of the South; Henry Clay the majestic orator, patriot and statesman and the idol of the American people; Daniel Webster, the great American constitutional lawyer, whose orations have come down to us unequalled specimens of eloquence, argument, logic, and beauty of diction.

My columns have, from time to time, been draped in mourning as a testimonial of the loss we all experienced in the demise of America's Washington Irving and J. Fenimore Cooper, or of England and Scotland's Dickens, Bulwer and Macaulay.

The triumphs of Jenny Lind, Kate Hayes, Anna Bishop, Alboni, Parodi, Parepa, Neilson and other queens of songs have been duly pictured in my *Post*. It is something, to truthfully say, that one has heard all the great singers of a generation!

How my columns have painted the rise and wonderful progression of Buffalo; how I have witnessed its advance in population, wealth, resources and intellectual development. How came up in my mind this day the Buffalo of upwards of thirty years ago. Its docks were then the liveliest part of it.

Floating palaces left daily for western ports crowded with first-class passengers. Commercial street and the wharves were then busy places indeed. People fairly hurried to and fro. Bands played and all seemed merry as the marriage bell. Railroads were not then, as now, king, and the steamer and stage coach were the fashion.

Again, contrast for a moment the Young Men's Association of thirty years ago when, at the most, two or three hundred persons attended the lectures at the rented rooms on South Division street, ushered in by Mr. Sergeant, the librarian, with the immense audiences who now throng St. James Hall on a lecture night. And the best part of it is that the association, which I have seen come up from its very infancy, now owns St. James block, upon the site of which, in olden times, Carr and Warren successfully managed the Eagle street theatre, and, what is not to be overlooked, will soon occupy its new and elegant building on Washington street between Broadway and Clinton. Under the able administration of its President, Hon. Jewett M. Richmond, the association now enjoys exceptional prosperity.

What changes I have seen in the Buffalo bar. Well do I remember the tall and commanding form of General George P. Barker (whose life I wrote in 1848), whose eloquence was magnetic; there were the brilliant and high-toned Henry K. Smith, the persuasive and learned Solomon G. Haven, the severely intellectual and statesmanlike Albert H. Tracy, the elegant, eloquent and genial Eli Cook, always universally popular; there were Moseley, Sherwood, Tillinghast, Austin, Sawin, Sill and others who stood in the very front rank of their profession. How often have I been charmed by their oratory, moved by their pathos, and delighted with their humor and wit.

What ravages, too, has time made upon the bench of Buffalo. Judge Seth E. Sill, James Mullett, Isaac A. Verplanck, Joseph G. Masten, Nathan K. Hall and George W. Houghton, have

each in time been called away from the busy scenes of life to a better and happier home. What changes, too, I have witnessed in our city churches. At the time to which I advert there were only two Episcopal churches, St. Paul's, Rev. Dr. Shelton, pastor, and Trinity, Rev. Mr. Hawks, subsequently bishop of Missouri, pastor. There were two Presbyterian churches, the First, and Rev. Dr. Lord's (Central Presbyterian), the Washington Street Baptist, Grace Church (the Methodist), the Universalist and the Unitarian, and two Catholic churches, St. Patrick's on Batavia and St. Louis on Main street. Then there were no grand, imposing, beautiful cathedrals, no medical colleges, no art galleries, glistening with superb gems of art; no historical society; no magnificent park; no splendid bank buildings; no steam fire engines; no talk about gas and water monopolies. We had no city water works and we all felt profoundly grateful for our gas works.

I have made mention of the historic old Eagle Street Theatre, where I saw the famous Junius Brutus Booth, the illustrious Macready, and America's unsurpassed Edwin Forrest, and Charlotte Cushman. As a matter of local history, I pleasantly recall to mind in this connection the present beautiful, ably managed and successful Academy of Music, of which our worthy townsmen, the Messrs. Henry L. and John H. Meech, are owners and managers.

I hope I shall be acquitted of egotism when I say that as an editor, I have endeavored at all times to do my duty. I have endeavored to expose corruption and fraud; to raise up the down-trodden and lowly; to advance in every manner in my power, the interests of civilization, our common humanity and true Christianity. I have never sought to array class against class, or nationality against nationality. I have upheld the flag of this, my adopted country, whenever and wherever its honor has been assailed, and have never stooped so low as to defame the land of my birth. I glory in Buffalo, and hope to ever be true to its interests.

Finally, as I remember the uncertainty of all things earthly; as I remember how transitory are mortal affairs, I fervently exclaim, in the historic language of Tiny Tim:

"God bless us every one!"

APPENDIX.

"JOURNALISM"—CONTINUED FROM 1876 TO 1886.

A DECADE has elapsed since the preceding pages were written and read before the Buffalo Historical Society. It is, consequently, proper that I should mention the present administration of the papers of the city.

The Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, now under the sole proprietorship of James D. Warren, was never more prosperous or ably conducted. It is not only a power in Western New York, but in the nation. Mr. Warren, by his executive ability, his unsullied personal character and his courageous devotion to principle, has won a position of great prominence. The confidence which is reposed in him, and the universal respect in which he is held, was evidenced by the unsolicited and cordial support extended to him as a candidate for the republican nomination for governor. May our honored townsman long live to enjoy his well-earned success. His son, Orsamus G. Warren, is intrusted with the entire business management of the extensive establishment, and his decided ability, his untiring devotion to his duties and his uniform courtesy are invaluable aids in the transaction of the large and increasing business of the concern. William E. Foster is editor-in-chief. His style is forcible and scholarly, and he knows how to hit hard without transcending the decencies and amenities of journalism. Mr. Foster reflects honor on the profession as a scholar and gentleman. The associate editors, William J. Morgan and Frank M. Hollister, are gentlemen of positive ability, and by their attainments and experi-

ence are well qualified for their positions. Isaac Bromley is fast acquiring an enviable reputation by his special articles, which evidence superior talent. Edwin Bangasser, the commercial editor and reporter, has won his way to the position he now ably fills from an apprentice boy. He has genuine talent, and has amply justified the kindness of the proprietor of the *Commercial* in promoting him. The sporting editor of the paper, Frank G. Smith, is first-class in the discharge of his duties, and makes his department especially interesting. J. R. Drake ably and acceptably acquits himself as musical critic, and is an affable, scholarly gentleman. Arthur W. Austin faithfully and with positive ability fills the important station of city editor, efficiently assisted by Sidney G. Sherwood. Mr. James Albro still remains on the staff of the *Commercial*, as vigorous and genial as of old. The foreman of the newspaper department, N. W. Thayer, has, for over thirty years, acceptably and faithfully acquitted himself.

The Buffalo daily *Courier* is the oldest, the most influential, the most prosperous and ablest conducted democratic daily paper in the state outside of New York city. Since my connection with the press of Buffalo, two of its eminent proprietors, Messrs. Joseph Warren and Charles Willard M'Cune, have passed from their spheres of great usefulness and exceptional success to their eternal home. Mr. Warren was a man of commanding influence in the democratic party, an honest, public-spirited, patriotic citizen, a writer of great force and elegance, and a generous, agreeable gentleman. Buffalo is deeply indebted to him for his enlightened, unselfish public spirit. Ex-Lieutenant-Governor William Dorsheimer (one of the most brilliant men in the state, and a noble-hearted, chivalrous gentleman), Dennis Bowen and Joseph Warren, did yeoman's service in the origination and bringing to a successful completion our magnificent park system, and that noble charity, the Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane. Indeed, it can be safely said, that without these three gentlemen (now, alas!

deceased) and Professor James P. White (also deceased), Buffalo would not to-day have had either of those invaluable additions to the importance, the welfare and the beauty of our city. Charles W. M'Cune, during the comparatively brief period that he was President of The Courier Company, not only achieved rare business success, but became a power in the councils of the democratic party, a Buffalonian of great prominence, a public-spirited, generous-hearted citizen, and won the universal respect and confidence of all who were brought in contact with him. In his demise, in the midst of rare prosperity, so soon after a happy matrimonial connection with one of the fairest daughters of Buffalo, our city lost one of its noblest men, and the party of which the *Courier* is a conceded organ, an influential supporter. Buffalo met with a great loss when passed from earth Charles W. M'Cune!

George Bleistein is a worthy successor of his life-long friend. His exceptional success is gratifying to his hosts of friends, and is another illustration that the highest positions in the land, as well as the most unbounded success in business, are approached in this country by no royal road. Mr. Bleistein worked his way up by real ability, great industry and affability, to an important position under Mr. M'Cune's administration, and his intimate knowledge of the vast business of The Courier Company, and ability to manage it, pointed him out as the man to fill the vacant presidency. The touching motto, "My Best Friend," wrought in a floral offering placed by Mr. Bleistein on the casket of his dead employer, in some measure conveys the sentiment which prevailed between the two. He has justified the expectations of those who promoted him, and I have yet to hear an envious utterance at his good fortune.

Edwin Fleming, editor-in-chief of the *Courier*, is one of the most vigorous and accomplished writers on the Buffalo press. Bold, epigrammatic and scholarly, he daily furnishes power and freshness to its columns. Mr. Fleming, for some ten years, was the Washington correspondent for prominent news-

papers, such as the *Buffalo Courier*, *New York Journal of Commerce*, *Detroit Free Press* and *St. Louis Republican*. His associates now on the *Courier* are Messrs. Otto Albing, Leslie Thom, F. A. Shepard and Walter Cary. Leslie Thom is a brilliant, industrious and forcible writer who has already made his mark on several of our city journals. The columns of the paper are also enriched by articles and correspondence from the graceful pens of the Misses Jeanette M. Welch and Charlotte Mulligan. Messrs. Charles A. Thomas, Thomas Murphy, J. Gordon Kellas, A. Monte Cutler, and Mr. A. W. Lyman (Washington correspondent), are also employed on the *Courier*.

George Ferris, city editor, has for many years displayed marked ability and industry in the discharge of his important duties. He is a veteran in the journalistic ranks, and is quite at home in his favorite profession. H. D. Vought, for many years city editor of the *Buffalo Evening Post*, has for several years done good service on the *Courier* staff. He is talented, faithful and efficient. Simon Fleischmann, a gentleman of versatile talent, is the able and brilliant dramatic and musical critic of the *Courier*. I predict for him decided success in his professional pursuit. John L. Schrader, formerly a useful member of the staff of the *Buffalo Evening Post*, is now the efficient and capable commercial and marine editor of the *Courier*, and displays ability, much industry and faithfulness. Charles Schweigert, also formerly connected with the *Buffalo Evening Post*, is now and has been for many years the efficient and acceptable foreman of the *Courier* composing-room.

The success of the Sunday and daily *News* in Buffalo has been something extraordinary. The Sunday paper was established in November, 1873, by Edward H. Butler. On October 11, 1880, he issued the first number of the now live, prosperous, ably conducted daily *News*, with its over 37,000 daily circulation! Mr. Butler, the editor and proprietor of these influential papers, is a man of "indomitable" pluck,

perseverance and industry. He is fearless and independent, loyal to his friends, and a terror to his opponents and defamers. He was sympathetic and generous to me in my days of business trouble. In the business management of his establishment he is ably and efficiently assisted by his genial brother, J. Ambrose Butler. Mr. William McIntosh displays decided talent and industry as managing editor. He has already made a prominent position on Buffalo journalism. Edward W. Drew, who for a time was on the staff of the *Post*, is on the *News* staff and gracefully acquits himself.

The Sunday morning *Times* was established by Norman E. Mack, about six years ago, and is a decided success. The Buffalo daily *Times*, of which Mr. Mack was also the original editor and proprietor, was first issued some three years ago. It is now the official paper of the city, has a large and increasing circulation, and is published by the *Times* Printing Company, of which Mr. Mack is president. The *Times'* editor-in-chief is James Cronley, formerly of the *News*. He is an editor of positive force and ability and exerts decided influence. F. C. Gram ably fills the position of city editor. The *Times* is independent democratic in politics.

Francis F. Fargo, by his connection editorially with the *Express*, *Times*, and other journals of the city, has displayed ability, attainments and industry as a writer which have given him a prominent position. He is also an effective, graceful speaker, and his logic and eloquence have powerfully aided the republican party in Western New York. His editorial and public career in California were highly creditable to him. As a member of the California legislature and Clerk of the Supreme Court of the State he made a good record. He also made an admirable president of the Press Club of Buffalo, and ably filled the position of city clerk.

The Buffalo *Christian Advocate* is now in a more prosperous condition than ever. Rev. S. McGerald, a gentleman of solid attainments and sterling character, is its editor and proprietor.

One year ago, at the Genesee Methodist Conference, Rt. Rev. Bishop Hurst, at the unanimous request of the Conference, appointed Mr. McGerald, editor of the *Advocate*. In December, 1885, he became sole proprietor. Under his able administration, the circulation has more than trebled. It is now upwards of 6,000 weekly, and is steadily increasing. In connection with this paper, I notice with pleasure that Charles A. Brosart, formerly in my employ on the Buffalo *Evening Post*, is still foreman, a position he has well filled for over a quarter of a century.

The *Catholic Union* still prospers, and there is good reason for it, as its editor and manager, Rev. P. Cronin, is favorably and widely known for his ripe talents as a journalist, his ready and persuasive oratory and his large-hearted devotion to the interests of our common humanity. The *Union* has been made strong and exceptionally useful under the control of my gifted cotemporary.

Since my lecture was originally written, Frederick Held, the long-time and respected editor and proprietor of the German daily *Democrat*, has deceased. He was a self-made, honorable man, wielded a large influence in the democratic party, and was recognized as a representative German-American citizen. The *Democrat* is now successfully managed by his son, William H. Held and his brother. It is an influential paper.

William Thurstone has for upwards of twenty-three years displayed rare industry, vigorous intellect and never-failing urbanity in the discharge of his arduous and important duties as Secretary of the Board of Trade and Merchant's Exchange. In addition to the constant labor and care involved in the performance of the requirements of this position, he has been for more than twenty years the commercial editor of the Buffalo daily *Courier*. He has also been the painstaking, valuable market correspondent for New York and western journals, and furnished for many years, as an expert of the United States government, valuable statistical reports of the trade

and commerce of the lakes, railroads and canals. He has always been a zealous worker for old folk's festivals, church charities, and good enterprises generally. He was the first and only democrat who ever represented the Ninth ward in the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Thurstone possesses versatile ability, and wins by his generous, genial social qualities, the good opinion of all who come in contact with him.

The *Sunday Truth* was established August 13, 1882. It is strictly independent in politics, is the largest weekly paper in Buffalo, is quite widely circulated and is especially read by the laboring class. It is a bright, ably conducted sheet. Messrs. Hausauer & Rappold are the publishers, and they are deserving, capable gentlemen. Richmond C. Hill, an experienced, accomplished writer, is managing editor, and John S. V. Bowen, city editor, is a capable gentleman.

The *Farmer's Review and Live Stock Journal* is published weekly by the Messrs. Webster Brothers. It is devoted to farm and live stock interests, and is a decided success. Mr. C. H. Webster, a meritorious gentleman, ably edits it.

The *Sixteenth Amendment* is the title of a weekly prohibition paper, which is printed by the Sixteenth Amendment Publishing Company. W. H. H. Bartram is the editor, and he is assisted by A. N. Olmsted, an efficient, thorough business man. It is the sole newspaper representative of the third party, prohibitionists, in Buffalo.

The *Argus* is the title of a monthly publication, devoted to the interests of fraternal co-operative insurance, as exemplified by the Ancient Order of United Workmen. R. C. Hill is editor and H. B. Loomis business manager.

The *Freie Presse* is now, and has been for years, the able German organ of the republican party in Western New York. Its editor, Richard Goebel, wields an able and graceful pen, and has displayed decided ability on the paper. Its publishers, Messrs. Reinecke & Zesch are worthy, responsible gentlemen.

There are several other publications in the city of a specialty character, but they do not come within the objects of this portion of my volume.

The growth of the newspaper press of the country may be measured by the fact that the number of periodicals of all classes has increased from 2,526 in 1850 to 11,403, in 1880, and their circulation from 5,142,177 copies to 31,177,924. During the same period the number of dailies increased from 254 to 980, and their circulation from 758,454 to 3,637,424, while the number of weeklies increased from 1,902 to 8,718, and their circulation from 2,944,629 to 19,459,107. The growth has been decidedly rapid during the last ten years. The hot canvasses that preceded 1860, and the war that followed it, gave that sort of literature an abnormal growth for a few years. Of these 11,403 periodicals, 8,816 published in the census year 1880 were newspapers in the strict sense, and of the whole number of publications 10,625 were in the English language. The State of New York leads in every department of periodical literature, still she only has 116 daily papers; in this department Pennsylvania follows close with 100; Illinois comes next with 75; California is fourth with 59, and Ohio fifth with 56. Alabama, Florida, Maine, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Utah, and Vermont have no publications in any foreign language. Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Tennessee have one each. In the matter of circulation the pre-eminence of this state in periodical literature is more marked. The circulation of New York's daily papers amounts to 999,048, while the circulation of publications of every description foots up to 9,368,495; Pennsylvania follows, but at a distance, with 598,627 and 5,517,343; Illinois is third with 270,183 and 2,445,960; Massachusetts fourth with 280,399 and 1,938,818, and Ohio fifth with 215,934 and 1,885,347. The average circulation of each daily in the country is 3,971; of each weekly 2,177, and of each monthly 7,917. The average subscription price of each daily is \$7.31,

and of each weekly \$1.75. In the costliness of production and value of product the supremacy of New York is most especially noticeable.

The amount annually paid in wages throughout the country in the production of periodical literature is \$28,571,336.38; the value of the product is \$87,441,132.22 of which 46.21 per cent. is derived from the sale of papers and 53.79 per cent. from advertisements. The wages paid in this state amount to \$6,460,071 and the value of the product to \$24,282,660.52. Pennsylvania is next in rank, but the publishers spend on wages only \$2,913,164 and realize but \$9,341,497.

The growth of the American press is more rapid than the increase of population; the rate of the former during the past ten years was 49.16; the rate of the latter was only 30 per cent. This growth is uniform. The area of country to each publication is 260.46 square miles; and the area of settled country is 137.64. The number of inhabitants to each periodical is 4,399. In frequency of publications, considered with reference to territory, Massachusetts leads, having one to every nineteen square miles. It is a remarkable fact that out of the 2,604 counties of the United States 2,072 have papers published in them, and in no state east of the Missouri and north of Mason and Dixon's line is there a county without a newspaper, though there is not a single Southern state in which every county is supplied with one. The smallest town in the country which supports a daily newspaper is Weldon, North Carolina, with a population of 932; but Tombstone, Arizona, with a population of 973, has two, and Eureka, California, with a population of 2,639, has three.

Though the rate of increase among American periodicals is large, the mortality among them is something frightful—especially what might be called the infant mortality. During the census year not less than 1,120 journals of one kind or another were started, and no less than 905 failed. Pittsburg with 11 dailies, circulating 111,001 copies, has a paper for every

1.14 of its inhabitants, and New York with 29 dailies, circulating 765,743 copies, has a paper for 1.57 of its inhabitants, while Brooklyn with 4 dailies, circulating 48,537 copies, has only one paper every day for 11.67 of its inhabitants.

It is a notable fact that printing was known in China in the sixth century, introduced into England in about 1474, and the United States in 1536.

As a part of the history of our city journalism, I here copy in full my remarks on the occasion of the memorial ceremonies of respect to the memory of Professor Samuel Finley Breese Morse, the inventor of the electro-magnetic telegraph. The meeting was held in the Central Presbyterian Church on Tuesday evening, April 16, 1872. The spacious edifice was crowded by an audience of our very best and representative people. On motion of his Honor Mayor Brush, ex-President Fillmore was called upon to preside. Around the pulpit were many of our most eminent citizens. Among others were Rt. Rev. Bishop Coxe, Lieut.-Governor Dorsheimer, Rev. Dr. Shelton, Rev. Dr. Heacock, Hon. W. P. Letchworth, F. H. Root, Esq., and P. P. Pratt, Esq. The exercises were opened with an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Dr. Lord. The speakers designated for the occasion were Rt. Rev. Bishop Coxe, Rev. Dr. Muller, Lieutenant-Governor Dorsheimer, George S. Hazard and George J. Bryan, then editor and proprietor of the *Buffalo Evening Post*. Mr. Bryan's address, which is copied from the "Memorial of Samuel Finley Breese Morse," published by order of congress, at the government printing office, Washington, 1875, was as follows:

" But mightiest of the mighty means
On which the arm of Progress leans,
Man's noblest mission to advance,
His woes assuage, his weal enhance,
His rights enforce, his wrongs redress,
Mightiest of mighty is the Press."

Truly has the poet sung, "The pen is mightier than the sword." There is "a power behind the throne" greater than

the throne itself. Journalism, the free press, is the cornerstone of human liberty. Charles X. and Louis Phillippe lost their crowns by vainly endeavoring to crush it out. The two great English-speaking nations of the world have been taught by their untrammelled journals that "it is preferable to die freemen rather than to live slaves." To the "art preservative of all arts," to the press, the world is mainly indebted to-day for whatever of constitutional liberty it enjoys. I love to hear the rumbling of the steam-power press better than the roar of artillery. It is silently attacking and vanquishing the Malakoffs of vice and Sedans of evil, and its parallels and approaches cannot be resisted. I like the click of the type in the composing-stick better than the click of the hammer of the musket in the hands of the soldier. It bears a leaden messenger of deadlier power, of sublimer force, and of surer aim, which will hit its mark though a thousand miles away.

How telegraphing has revolutionized journalism! How, by its magic wand, the mighty events that mark our day and generation pass into magnificent procession before us! Its condensed eloquence, its epigrammatic sentences surpass all attempts at oratory. How, for instance, we were thrilled as we were told that Chicago—the city of the continent that most truly reflects the genius, the wonderful progress of the American people—was burning. How its appeal for aid to our famishing brothers evoked a response as princely as it was electric. While the proudest monuments of human genius in the devoted city were still burning, the same wires flashed back the munificence of our large-hearted people. Our whole population rose, as it were, *en masse*, illustrating that "a touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Some of the grandest events of modern times have been chronicled by this stupendous agency; the union of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans by the completion of the Pacific Railway; the series of mighty battles before Richmond; its fall; Sherman's march to the sea, and Sheridan's ride to

Winchester, twenty miles away. How the boldest held his breath for a time, as the wires flashed to an astounded people the news of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, whose unselfish patriotism and heroic devotion to human freedom endeared his name like another Washington.

But the other day, lightning presses, reproducing the cable intelligence, kept us advised of the profound sensation felt throughout the British empire as the heir-apparent to the throne lay at the point of death. The deep sympathy felt for the prince and his noble mother, illustrated that we have not yet forgotten those ties of a common language, of a common origin, laws, and literature, and like grand achievements in civilization, which should insure between the two nations a continuance of our present peaceful and mutually beneficial relations.

O, how the public journal photographs by its telegraphic and other news the sum-total of human existence! It reflects as in a mirror the ambitions, the struggles, the agonies, the joys, the sorrows of our race; it paints, as in the recent case of the French emperor at Sedan, the uncertainty of all earthly power and grandeur; it pictures to us, as it did in the colossal struggle between France and Germany, the sanguinary horrors of cruel war. From the golden lands of California to the Atlantic, from far-off India, yea, to the uttermost isles of the sea, the magic wires bring to our live journals messages full of weal and woe, of deep import to all interests and all classes.

But for journalism telegraphy would be comparatively useless. Our presses scatter its treasures broadcast throughout the land, and they make newspapers an actual necessity. The press and telegraph combined may safely be pronounced, next to Christianity, the most powerful agencies in the world in promoting the civilization, the happiness and the intellectual advancement of the human race.

Magic wires are stretching themselves in all directions over the earth, and when their mystic meshes shall at length have

been perfected, our globe itself will be endowed with a sensitiveness which will render it impossible to touch it on any one point and the touch not be felt from one end of the world to the other. And this work is but just commenced ; it is but the beginning of the dawn of the world's great jubilee. It promises a day of more refinement, more intellectual brightness, more moral elevation, and, consequently, more human felicity than the world has ever seen since its creation.

I cannot close these historical and autobiographical sketches and reminiscences of journalism without offering a few considerations with reference to the responsibilities and duties of an editor. We are all laboring in a common cause. I think it may be truly said that the press, the free press, all over the world, has but one common mission—to elevate humanity. It takes the side of the humble, the lowly, and the poor—always of necessity, a necessity of its own existence—as against those who from mere position and power hold in their hands the destinies of the lowly and the poor, for whom the press is instituted. We are all of us, more or less directly, more or less exclusively, connected with the movements of governments—governments of various forms, in different parts of the world, and through different agencies and ways, in that common effort to elevate the great mass of our fellow-men, to improve their material condition, and give them a higher ground to stand upon, and a stronger foot to go through the weary task that all of us, in some degree, have to undergo before we fulfill our pilgrimage here on earth.

Newspapers are educators of the people. It is a momentous truth, yes, a fearful truth, that the millions have no literature, no school, and almost no pulpit, but the press. It is parent, pulpit, school, college, theatre, example, counselor, all in one. Let me make the newspapers, and I care not who makes the religion or the laws. In fact, were the starry heavens deficient of one constellation, the vacuum could not be better supplied than by the introduction of a printing press.

To discharge fully the duties of a public journalist would be to elevate the vocation to the loftiest summit of human dignity and usefulness. A public journalist animated with a due sense of the obligations of his responsible trust, and gifted with the faculties, intellectual and physical, for their adequate performance, would well deserve to be a public leader in a more extended signification of the phrase than that in which it is understood. He should have a mind filled with a great variety of human learning, and a ready command of all its stores. He should have a head cool, clear and sagacious; a heart warm and benevolent; a nice sense of justice; honesty that no temptation could corrupt; intrepidity that no danger could intimidate, and independence superior to every consideration of mere interest, enmity, or friendship. I claim that the profession of journalism is the noblest and most elevating of any, inasmuch as the press is the bulwark of civil and religious liberty and constitutional freedom. It is the car driven by lightning steam power that propels civilization, and dignifies and exalts humanity. Consequently, personalities and invective indulged in beyond proper limitations are to be deprecated and avoided. To my mind, it is revolting to see journalism diverted into scurrility and license.

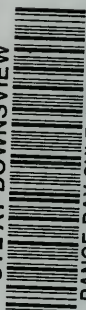
My lecture is now near its close. My connection with journalism has been the pride of my life. I have been especially favored by Divine Providence with length of days. May my last be better than my first. May I yet live to contribute something more to the welfare of Buffalo and our common humanity.

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